

# *Inland Seas*



QUARTERLY BULLETIN OF THE  
GREAT LAKES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Volume VII

1951

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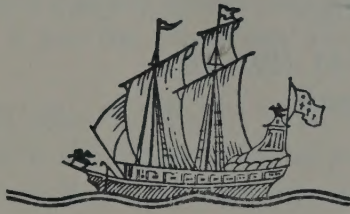
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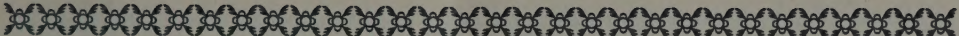
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## Wooden Ship Building

By H. C. INCHES



**I**N THE DAYS OF WOODEN SHIPS and iron men the wooden ship building industry attained gigantic proportions nearly all the way around the Great Lakes. It was the forerunner of our modern metal shipyards.

From the period just after the War of 1812, when the first start was made, until the late '80's, the construction of wooden ships furnished a great amount of labor much needed when the country around the lakes was being settled, the demand for hard-wood aiding the farmer to pay for his land and the clearing of it as well as for stock and tools. It also gave work for him and his horses during the slack winter months in getting out the timber and hauling it to the building yards.

As a boy, I ran and played around and over these wooden ships while they were under construction. Many were built close to my home and I passed a shipyard each day as I went to school. I heard a great deal of shop talk regarding their building, from the old timers as they sat around their wood burning stoves in the local grocery stores, and in the shipyard loft on days when they did not work because of the weather.

Nearly all our early vessels were financed where they were built, by the local men, merchants, prosperous farmers, men who owned all or shares in other ships. Sometimes the captain who was to sail these ships occasionally took a share or two. The ship was a local business venture throughout the financing and the building, all at home or nearby, with the oak all from the adjacent forest and the men living close to their work. No stock was sold; shares were sold instead. The money raised was handed over when the vessel was completed — all paid for; and these ships always remained the pride of the port from which they were launched as long as they sailed the waters.



It took little money to equip and start a shipyard in those early days. They had no saw mill, nor jig saw. The yard furnished the cross-cut saw, long ship augers and the large metal clamps to pull and force the planks and shapes into place and hold them there for fastening. The ship carpenters owned and carried the wood working tools to the shipyard on their shoulders, the broad axe, the ship axe and the adze, also the many wooden planes and smaller tools; therefore the greater amount of the money went for labor and material locally.

The land for a yard was sometimes purchased in cases where the builders were to continue on for the life of the industry. In other cases, the land was rented when these local men wanted to build only one, two or three ships.

Other shipyards built ships continuously from the start just after 1814 until the local timber was exhausted and the metal ship era started in the late '80's. Even after this some yards went on for many years, making light repairs or giving a vessel a complete rebuild.

In the '80's the scene started to change. Metal ships were replacing the wooden ones; more and more ships were needed for the expanding commerce; building of ships moved to the larger cities with good railroads, heavy machinery and steel.

The first wood ships built were built all with hand labor, with no sawmill with its circular saw to cut the planks, and they were not called planks, but flitches. Webster calls both a side of bacon a flitch and a long strip of timber a flitch. They had no jig mill to cut shapes out of these flitches for the ship's frames or ribs. The sawing of them was called whip-sawing and was done by rolling a log up on two high saw horses, with one man underneath and one standing on the log. With a cross-cut saw they would saw from one end to the other until the entire log was cut into flitches of the required thickness.

Most of the material in logs was hauled to the yard by horse teams in the winter when the ground was frozen hard and the sleighing good. It was far easier by sleigh than by wagon; the farmers had the time in winter, also the teams were available. This logging was good for the farmer as it furnished good cash for labor when he needed it most. It was called a tough winter when they did not have good sleighing.

In starting a shipyard the first thought was to acquire a piece of ground large enough along the waterfront, at about the right height above the water, so that the ship when ready for launching would slide down the launching ways by its own weight. They also needed the keel block not too far from the water's edge, and the water's edge not too far from an adequate depth of water to float the vessel when she left the ship's ways.

I want to give some idea of the great number of ships built all around the lakes, Ontario, Erie, Huron and Michigan, all but Lake Superior. [I know of no vessel of wood being built on that lake, except two small ones built at Point Aux Pines, just above the Soo. Here in 1733 La Ronde built a 40 ton sloop; in 1793 a 75 ton sloop was built.]

The Lake Superior region could not furnish the good oak timber, could not furnish the commodities for freight, due to the fact that this part of the country was far behind the other lake districts in getting settled and developed. No one district had a monopoly on this business that grew to such gigantic proportions. It helped to open up this country all around the lakes. The ships carried immigrants west, also the necessities they needed to live and thrive on, and the articles they needed to open up the country and develop it; and on return carried grain and lumber to eastern markets.

Why did they build so many wood ships and faster than the business expanded?

Our ships on the lakes were made of the finest white oak, framed and planked,<sup>1</sup> whereas our Atlantic Coast clipper ships, the fastest ever built for sail, were oak ribbed and planked with southern pine. Even at that, our good oak ships were at their best only for 15 years. After that it usually cost nearly all the ship could clear to keep it seaworthy, as one winter the ship would need repair on the port bow, then soon after probably the starboard quarters, and after that a new deck. When decay started there was no stopping it.

The difference in the life span between the wood and metal ships shows up in these facts. The engines and boilers in our wooden vessels were

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1. An exception was the schooner *George Nestor*, 790 tons, built all of Norway pine at Baraga, Michigan, in 1887, which was late in the age of wooden vessels.



very often used in three different wood ships, due to the limited life of wood. Also, a great many ships burned and their machinery would be salvaged and placed in a new hull. I can remember several engines that outlived three different hulls.

Today some of our metal hulls are outliving two engines built of metal, just the reverse from the wooden-ship era.

I have heard old timers say that after 15 years, repairs were a constant source of trouble and expense. A wooden ship was very old at 20 to 25 years. Some did continue at that age and were known as tubs or floating crates, but did operate at times when freight rates were high.

Mansfield's *History of the Great Lakes*, published by Beers, tells us that in the year 1869 we had 1860 vessels of all types on the lakes. Some of these were large vessels in that day, though today they would be considered small. 1860 vessels are four times the number we have today, but our ships are five to ten times the size of our early vessels, all propelled by steam and making trips on schedule. In 1869 Beers lists these vessels: 126 side wheel, 140 screw propeller, 240 steam tugs, 175 barques, 50 brigs and 904 fore-and-aft or topsail schooners.

To have 1860 vessels in operation at one time, with all the total losses each year, and the short life of a wood vessel due to deterioration, fire and explosion, they had to build them fast and all around the lake shore and rivers.

Why were the total losses so great each year? These are some figures from Beers:

1851—89 total losses.

1859—60 steamers and 30 sail vessels went out of register, all causes.

1864—45 vessels, total losses.

1869—In the month of September 35 vessels were lost and in November same year in the storm which lasted from 16th to 19th, 31 vessels became total losses.

1880—Was spoken of as a year quite free from total losses, as only 45 vessels were lost and 11 of those were from fire and boiler explosions.

1885—77 vessels went out of commission from all causes. The wooden ships were giving way to metal and some of these losses were from storms, fire and strandings, some were ships abandoned on account of age.



The total losses due to heavy seas were tremendous. There were few breakwaters. A sailing ship trying to make port and shelter by entering a narrow entrance through piers did not have much assurance of doing so, and if she failed to get into proper position, she had no steam propulsion power to work back out into the lake and deep water.

They had no direction finders, gyro compasses or radar. The harbor lights were poor. There were few fog signal stations. All the early navigators had aboard their ship was a magnetic compass and a lead line. If they missed a harbor entrance they went with the wind and disaster. They were at the mercy of the wind and snow storms.

But few sailing ships were destroyed by fire. The only fire they had was in the galley stove which could be watched. In the late 1830's, however, when a good many steamers appeared on the scene, disaster from fire grew in numbers each year. This is not to be wondered at, for these ships were built of the very best material for a fire to thrive on. They knew of no fire-resisting insulation to put around the boilers and had no patent hand fire extinguishers. When a fire got started, there wasn't much chance of stopping it.

Boiler explosions took a heavy toll also. In one year there were nine total losses from that cause alone. In another year eleven went that way. Why? They did not have the means for testing steel, nor perfected safety valves, nor yet the strict and efficient Government boiler inspection of today.

With the limited span of life of the wood vessel due to deterioration of wood, the losses caused by wind, fire and explosions, together with the ever expanding lake trade, I often wonder how the wood ship building industry kept up with the demand. The metal shipyards in time took over when white oak was about gone.

Here is a picture of a wooden ship being built, as I remember it. The first work was to level off a piece of ground parallel to the water as 98 percent of our ships were launched sideways. Then the keel blocks were placed for the length of the ship and for this a level was used. After this, the level was put away, as there was no more need for that tool, or for the steel square. In the actual construction of a ship the bevel and plumb line took their place. When you consider the sheer of a ship and the crown of the deck, you can see why that is so.

On the keel block was laid the keel plank of six-inch thickness. No keel timbers protruded below the keel plank in lake vessels as they would restrict the draft and dead weight cargo to the amount they went below such keel planks, and there is shallow water in many places.

Next the ship's frames or ribs were assembled, and all bolted together in one U-shaped piece from top side to bilge and around under the ship and to top side on the other side of the vessel. These were slid across and on top of the keel plank, then hauled to an upright position by block and tackle. They were placed about one foot apart, set perpendicular to the keel by a plumb line. The frames were set up amid ship, first working toward either end, after which the stem and stern posts were placed in position and plumbed.

The ship's planking was started on either side of the keel planks. A large flitch was placed on saw horses. The layout man with a tape line took his length for each plank. With a bevel he took the angle at each frame, placing the number of the frame and level line on a small thin board held in the crook of his left arm. He then went to the flitch in the yard and laid out his markings, transferring the angles and widths to the plank.

Two ship carpenters would then start with ship axe and adze, cutting away the edges down to the chalk lines. After this, it was planed to the right level, leaving a caulking seam. This would leave the outside of the plank narrower in width than the back, which went against the frame, leaving an open caulking seam of about  $\frac{1}{4}$  inch on outside edges running in two-thirds the thickness of the planks.

The planks on the bottom were usually four inches thick each side the keel planks and eight inches wide. They would narrow to six inches on the bilge; and I know of one large schooner, the *David W. Dows*, that had bilge planks six inches thick on the bilge, decreasing to five inches after the turn at the bilge was made.

The side planks varied in width from six to eight inches in amidship, but tapered as they approached the bow and stern. This was necessary because every strake of planks was maintained stem to stern, and the distance top of the stem to forefoot was about one-half of that from top side to keep amidship where the girth was the greatest. Therefore, the width varied at each frame.



Before the hull planking got too far along, the deck beams of twelve inches square oak-timbers were placed and fastened at top side at each frame running athwart ship. On them were laid northern white pine planks six inches wide and four inches thick, on whose edges a caulking seam was planed also. Most of this decking came out of northern Michigan. I have seen it cut in lengths up to 36 feet long without a knot.

After the deck beams were placed and fastened, the deck planks were laid. The hatch coamings were placed around the hatchways; these were of oak and placed on the deck planks around the openings. Their timbers were made of 8 by 12 pieces. This was work for the best mechanics and there were many of them. The fore and aft member was beveled on the outside and fitted to the sheer of the deck, and the cross member fitted to the crown of the deck. These timbers did not have a square side or end where a carpenter's steel square could be used. I have seen these large timbers joined at the corners with a lock joint so tight you could not slip a cigarette paper in at any place. Those wonderful mechanics could do that class of work in wood and be proud of it, also of the amount of work done in a day. Not so now.

While all this was going on, a keelson of 12 by 12 oak timbers was being built in the bottom of the ship over the frames and in line of the keel planks fore and aft stem to stern. This would sometimes in our large ships run four feet across and five feet high, all bolted together of these oak timbers. This was the backbone and main strength of the ship.

The ship was planked on the inside of the cargo hold with 4 by 12 inch planks. There was no caulking seam planed on these planks and the seams were not caulked. This added greatly to the strength of the vessel.

After the ship was planked, stem to stern and from keel to top side, the carpenters went to work and adzed down the entire outside planking. These men were artists with that tool and never made any deep gouges in the planks. Instead, they made the planks so smooth that the planing with a small plane was not a heavy job. This gave the ship a beautiful smooth finish outside.

Now the ship was ready for caulking the decks and the outside of the hull with a strand of cotton and three strands of oakum. These men were professionals, furnishing their tools and their own driving irons and mallets. This work was hard, standing under the ship, stooped over with one shoulder down, driving oakum overhead or sitting on a low stool on deck driving oakum under foot.

The mallets they used were of a different shape than I have seen used in any other vocation. When they were being worked they gave out a loud, musical ringing note that could be heard for blocks away. Each caulker tried to improve the ring of his mallet, knowing full well that every time he let up in his work or stopped work, every man in the yard would know it, so he wanted his mallet to ring out loud and clear. I applauded those men. They drove oakum in dry weather, and in wet weather they sat in the loft, spinning oakum over the knee and folding it into skeins ready for weather in which to resume driving.

The men who shaped the masts, yards and booms were also distinctive mechanics. They would take long, selected white pine logs 28 inches in diameter at the desk and 108 feet long, square them, then make them eight-cornered, then sixteen-cornered, tapered from heel to truck — then smoothed round with a plane. I have seen these professionals stand on one of these logs, swing a ship axe from over the shoulder and split a chalk line mark. They, too, took pride in their work.

When the masts were in place aboard the ship, along with the yards and booms, the riggers went to work splicing the shrouds and stays, bending the sails on yards and booms, slicing the halyards and reaming them off through the blocks.

From some old papers, I have read the cost of our early ships. From 1814 to 1820 they ran from \$15,000 to \$20,000 and some of the last and larger ones built cost \$25,000 to \$30,000.

The early steam vessels cost \$35,000 to \$40,000 in the period from 1835 to 1845. The Great Lakes is given credit for building the first fore and aft schooners and using the sail called the raffee, a triangular sail over the square sail on the foremast of a barkentine. These builders of ships I put into five classes, no one class being more important than the others, nor better workmen than the rest:



The ship carpenter shaped the planks and ribs.  
The ship joiner, the cabin work.  
The caulkers drove home the oakum.  
The mast makers shaped the spars, yards and booms.  
The ship riggers spliced and set the shrouds and stays.

These men were all local hardworking men who built ships when building was brisk, and who sailed on these ships when building was slack, and went into the woods in the winter getting out timber. In 1871 ship carpenters were paid \$1.50 a day; labor \$1.00 per day; the superintendent \$3.00 per day and good clear oak \$30 per 1000 foot board measure.

Longfellow wrote:

"We know what master laid thy keel,  
What workmen wrought thy ribs of steel,  
What anvils rang, what hammers beat,  
In what a forge and what a heat  
Were shaped the anchors of thy hope." <sup>2</sup>

I want to pay tribute to these faithful, hardworking men who worked ten hours a day, six days a week, men who took great pride in the character of their work and were proud and boastful of the number of planks they shaped and spikes they drove in a day.

They owned their homes, educated their children, raised gardens, put the flour and pork in by the barrel, hung hams in the attic. The woodshed was piled high with wood for winter.

As a boy I knew a great many of these men, played and went to school with their children, and I know there was not another vocation that included a finer group of hard working, good American citizens, or that could build a better or more beautiful and graceful ship. These men well knew that the security and well being of their homes in part hinged on the quality and amount of work they did. They enjoyed contentment and satisfaction; it gave them peace of mind and pride in their work.

This, then, is the story of a beautiful creation, a ship. There is not a single sharp angle any place and each change of shape works into

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2. Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, *The Building of the Ship*.

another gracefully and symmetrically. The caulking seams run true to form; the protruding covering board and cap of the bulwarks all give the ship graceful lines. The mast and rigging all make a picture of grace and ease.

To any man who loves a ship, has seen ships built and launched, sliding down the ways, taking to the water gracefully for the first time, it is then that they seem to take the breath of life and their own distinct personality, each different from the other, but all beautiful.

\* \* \* \* \*

The ship stands on the keel blocks, the launching ways are in place and I want you to know just how I have felt when I have watched a ship, built all by hand labor by men I knew in my home town, started from the keel, assembled timber by timber all from the nearby forest, rigged to the last stay and shroud and ready for launching at the master carpenter's command. The command is given, she starts, and then with moist eyes I feel, as the poet so beautifully put it:

Then the master  
With a gesture of command,  
Waved his hand;  
And at the word,  
Loud and sudden there was heard,  
All around them and below,  
The sound of hammers, blow on blow  
Knocking away the shores and spurs.  
And see! She stirs!  
She starts — she moves, — she seems to feel  
The thrill of life along her keel,  
And spurning with her foot the ground,  
With one exalting, joyous bound —  
She leaps into the ocean's arms!  
And, lo! from the assembled crowd  
There rose a shout, prolonged and loud,  
That to the ocean seemed to say,  
Take her, O bridegroom, old and gray,  
Take her to thy protecting arms,  
With all her youth and all her charms!





## Life Line of America

By LAWRENCE A. POMEROY, JR.



ONE OFTEN HEARS the five Great Lakes referred to as the "Life line of America." This phrase is quite apt because vast amounts of essential raw materials move over these waters each year, including iron ore, coal, stone and grain. Moreover, the low cost for performing this service is not equalled by other means of transportation elsewhere throughout the world.

During the present state of unrest in international affairs these lakes are even more than a life line; they are a vital artery of defense. Regardless of this, many casual observers take for granted the coming and going of freighters, the loading and unloading at the docks, the arrival and departure of long trains of cars, in short, the entire cycle of operations involved in the movement of these raw materials. The over-all importance of this is little realized except by those in actual day to day contact with such activity.

It was our recent good fortune to step out of the ranks of the casual observer and see this cycle at first hand from the best vantage point of all, the deck of a freighter. This came about through the courtesy of Walter C. Dressler, Vessel Manager for Oglebay, Norton & Company of Cleveland, operators of the Columbia Transportation Company, one of the oldest and best known fleets on the Lakes. For nine days we were a part of the integrated process of transporting coal and iron ore, beginning one afternoon at Toledo, Ohio, our day by day activity being as follows:

*Saturday, September 16:* We boarded the steamer *Howard M. Hanna, Jr.*, lying alongside a coal loading machine on the new lake front dock owned jointly by the Baltimore & Ohio and New York Central Railroads. We were soon greeted by our host for the voyage, Captain Joseph Richardson, who made certain that we were properly settled and then showed us around the vessel.

Coal was being placed in the four compartments of this ship, carload by carload, fifty to seventy tons at a time. The process accomplishing this was a miracle of efficiency. As each carload reached the machine, coming forward from one of the vast switching tracks in the railroad yards adjacent to the docks, it was gently lifted high into the air above the vessel, being turned bottom side up at the same time. The coal so released then flowed from car to vessel through a funnel-like device designed to minimize degradation or breakage as well as to eliminate dust and dirt. This device was controlled by a man located directly above the outlet into the ship's hold, thus assuring proper loading and trimming of the vessel. This process might well be compared to the manner in which a woman uses a sifter to insure accurate placement of flour when cooking.

Some 9,800 tons of cargo having been loaded in a few hours, together with 250 tons of fuel coal, we departed at 5:00 P. M. with Duluth-Superior as our destination. Crossing the western end of Lake Erie enroute to the Detroit River we were constantly reminded of the fact that we had become part of the "life line." There was a continual procession of freighters both up and downbound. Many of those upbound were loaded with coal like ourselves, while those downbound were carrying iron ore, grain or stone.

*Sunday, September 17:* Early morning found us at the head of the St. Clair River, passing the light ship and then setting our course up Lake Huron for Detour, at the mouth of the St. Mary's River. We took advantage of this first full day at sea to learn more about our ship and its crew.

The *Hanna, Jr.*, was built in 1914 at Lorain, Ohio by the American Ship Building Company, being 504 feet keel length, 54 feet wide and 30 feet deep. The hull is divided into four freight carrying compartments with a total capacity of some 10,000 tons. It is equipped with 15 hatches spaced 24 feet center to center.

The propulsion machinery consists of a conventional triple expansion steam engine. This is powered by two hand-fired Scotch boilers creating 1800 horse power by the consumption of one ton of coal each hour when underway.

The most modern navigating equipment has been provided, including radar, radio direction finder, ship to shore telephone and gyro-compass.



This equipment is costly but well worth while in that it serves a dual purpose, safety of the ship, its crew and cargo, as well as maximum utilization of the vessel in a business where every hour counts.

This giant vessel, worth over a million dollars, exclusive of cargo, is operated by a crew of 36, each skilled in his own field. The captain has over-all responsibility for the ship, being aided by three divisions that actually carry on everyday operations, namely, the deck, engineering and steward's departments. The deck department has 15 members, the engineering 16 and the steward's department four. Normal routine calls for a man to be on duty four hours and off eight twice in each 24 hour period.

As on the previous day, there was a constant stream of vessels to be seen, both up and downbound. At noon time we overtook and passed the Canadian steamer *Altadoc*, towing the barge *Kenordoc*. It was interesting to see this barge, not only as an example of a unique but vanishing method for transporting bulk cargoes on the Lakes, but also as a nostalgic reminder of one of the founders of Oglebay, Norton & Company, since the *Kenordoc* was originally built and launched as the *D. Z. Norton* away back in 1898.

*Monday, September 18:* Frank Muskardin, the first mate, called us early in the morning so that we would not miss seeing the Soo locks. We passed through the Davis lock at 6:00 A. M. and headed out into Whitefish Bay for the long run to Duluth at the western end of Lake Superior. The locking through is always an interesting sight, but little can be written about it today, the entire Lock area being a restricted one under heavy military guard. Suffice it to say that the tonnage handled here in the limited seven or eight month season is considerably greater than the 12 month total for the Panama, Suez and Kiel Canals combined.

We learned from Carl Neundorfer, the second mate, that our ship serves as a floating weather station, sending periodic reports each day by radio-telephone to the United States Weather Bureau at Cleveland. These coded reports give pertinent weather data for the area surrounding the vessel at the time of transmittal. Similar reports sent by several other vessels are coordinated and combined, thus giving up-to-date information to the forecasters, thereby aiding in predicting just what kind of weather is on the way.

One became increasingly aware of a distinct pride on the part of the crew of this ship, which could be likened to the esprit de corps of the Marines. Captain Richardson told how the *Hanna, Jr.*, is one of the strongest vessels ever built on the Lakes, heavier than ordinary steel plate having been selected by the owners for its construction. Chief Engineer Clarence Gustin showed us his engines, with enough power to pass all but the newest and fastest vessels. The mates told how well the ship rode in a heavy sea. The coal passers demonstrated how easily they could keep sufficient steam with good quality fuel coal.

*Tuesday, September 19:* Heavy fog in the afternoon, looming up suddenly and without warning, gave a practical demonstration of the value of radar. Vessels are normally assigned separate courses or traffic lanes, depending on the ultimate destination and whether upbound or downbound. The primary purpose of this is to lessen the possibility of collision during periods of poor visibility. Even so great care must be exercised because of the large number of vessels operating in any one area during the season of navigation.

The radar enabled Captain Richardson to determine the position of his own vessel with relation to other ships in the area, changing course as required. In addition, he used the radio-telephone to talk to the masters of nearby ships, thereby ascertaining the best means for keeping out of each other's way while inching through the fog. This proved to be of particular value when ships not equipped with radar were in the immediate vicinity of our own vessel. The inherent skill of a navigator is still the best device for safe operation, but radar does provide an extra measure of safety for vessels so equipped.

We passed under the aerial bridge at Duluth about 4:00 P. M. and tied up shortly thereafter at the Duluth dock where half our coal cargo was to be discharged. The importance of saving time was again apparent here, the coal unloading machines beginning operation almost at the moment the ship's lines were made fast to the pier.

*Wednesday, September 20:* We awakened in the morning still alongside the coal dock. Dense fog made it impossible to shift to another dock in nearby Superior for discharge of the remaining cargo. The early morning sun soon burned away the fog and the shift was made without further delay.

The coal unloaded at Superior consisted of both railway fuel and of fine slack for a briquet plant. The former was for the Northern Pacific Railway, while the latter was used by a compressing plant adjacent to the dock itself. Mr. Gravem, fuel inspector for the Northern Pacific, came aboard in the course of his duties and we enjoyed a brief visit with him, it developing that we had several mutual friends in Duluth, St. Paul and Cleveland.

The Captain told us the ship would be unloading all day so we decided to take a look at Superior. We went uptown in the early afternoon, going over to Duluth later in the day. Here we looked over the city itself, taking an automobile ride along the famous skyline drive. There were numerous vessels in the harbor but none showed up from a distance as clearly as the *Hanna, Jr.*, whose red funnel with orange-yellow band, red star and white "C" was plainly visible, although several miles away. We also had an opportunity to observe the operation of the Duluth, Missabe & Iron Range Railway's vast ore docks and supporting yards, where we were to take on a cargo of ore later that night.

We returned in time to see the last of the coal removed from our ship, a special design of grab bucket, plus a crew of shovelers in the hold taking out practically every bit. This being completed, the vessel was then shifted across the harbor to the ore docks at Duluth.

Here some 10,000 tons of iron ore were loaded in the remarkably short space of five or six hours. These upper lake iron ore docks have been designed so as to provide for just such prompt handling of vessels, the record for loading 12,500 tons being sixteen and one-half minutes, more than 750 tons per minute! A series of pockets or bins are built far out over the water, high in the air. Railroad tracks run above these pockets, permitting hopper cars to be discharged directly into each pocket. Chutes leading from the bottoms of the pockets are lowered through the open hatches into the cargo hold of a vessel, the ore then flowing into the hold by gravity. The vessel is shifted as required, only a few chutes being used at one time because of the heavy density of the ore. The loading proceeds so rapidly that one can actually see the ship settle into the water as each bin of ore is released.

*Thursday, September 21:* Morning found us on Lake Superior again, the ship having left the ore dock about 5:00 A. M. The weather changed



suddenly during the night and it was now quite cold with a rough sea. To illustrate the change, Captain Richardson was on the bridge in his shirt sleeves when we arrived at the ore dock, but when the ship departed, he had to wear his heavy overcoat.

During a visit to the pilot house, Taylor Larson, the third mate, cautioned us to watch for heavy waves which occasionally came over the bow and up that high. If the water was white the power of the wave had been spent; if the water was blue, there was still force enough to smash the windows. Fortunately blue was not in evidence, the waves lessening as the day progressed.

The cold weather made the galley an attractive place to visit, particularly with its warmth, and provided an opportunity to learn from the steward, Bernard Dascanio, of the inner workings of his department, and how he managed to satisfy the prodigious appetites of these lake men. The crew of 36 consumes food in amazing quantities during each 24 hour period. They drink 240 cups of coffee as well as 10 to 12 gallons of milk. Interestingly enough, the consumption of milk is on the increase. They spread six pounds of butter on the equivalent of four or five loaves of bread. They eat eggs at the rate of four or five dozen, one man in particular often downing 12 at a sitting.

The meals are prepared in a shining kitchen equipped with a large oil burning range, a frozen food locker and numerous gadgets to aid in the easier production of delicious meals. This kitchen is flanked by ample storage space for canned goods and bulk items, as well as a mammoth refrigerator or cooling room.

Dascanio's sister, Rose and her husband Jack, together with Sam Brown, the efficient porter, comprise the steward's staff. Rose displayed a remarkable ability in serving three meals a day, twice at each meal period, and yet maintained a spotless table with linen, silver, fresh fruit and other niceties that would put most shore restaurants to shame.

*Friday, September 22:* We were still on Lake Superior with an all day run to the Soo in prospect. There was some wind and a slight sea, but nothing compared with the previous day. Nevertheless, the Captain was watching the weather closely, as he did during the entire trip. Wind and rain on shore are often a mere nuisance; at sea, they are a vital part of one's safety and comfort. This close observation of the

weather was only one example of Captain Richardson's attention to detail, these details adding up to an over-all efficiency of operation for his ship.

We reached the Soo late in the afternoon, passing through the Davis lock about 5:00 P. M. Daylight passage made it possible to see much of the beautiful scenery in the St. Mary's River, fall colors just beginning to appear on the trees lining both the Canadian and American sides of the river.

Weather was again a topic of conversation during supper, word having been received of an impending blow. Dishes and silverware were stowed in racks shortly thereafter, and the tablecloth was wet down with water so as to prevent those few plates and cups that were needed from moving around and being smashed. These precautions proved unnecessary, however, the wind lessening during the night as we proceeded down Lake Huron.

*Saturday, September 23:* Even though the big blow had not materialized, there was still sufficient wind astern of us to cause a few waves to wash over the open deck from time to time. One had to watch his step in walking from one end of the ship to the other.

We proceeded steadily on our course down Lake Huron, noting several other nearby vessels bound in the same direction as our own, as well as large numbers in the distance, travelling on an opposite course, bound for the upper lakes and more ore. This constant procession of vessels, day and night, whether in narrow river or open lake, was a never ending source of amazement, illustrating more clearly than any charts or figures the tremendous traffic moving on the lakes each season.


The Blue Water Bridge at the foot of Lake Huron loomed up on the horizon in early afternoon. Shortly thereafter we entered the St. Clair River, lined on both sides with farms, residences and industrial centers. Many of the houses had well kept flower gardens, fall colors showing up beautifully in the late afternoon sun. However, none of the flowers equalled those on the *Hanna, Jr.* itself. The ship is well known by lake men because of Captain Richardson's flower boxes, filled with petunias and geraniums, plainly visible along the rail just below and aft of the pilot house. There is even a sprinkling can nearby for use in keeping these flowers at their best during the summer months.

Just before dusk we passed a steamer and barge, this also calling attention to a vanishing type of vessel. The barge in this instance was the whaleback 137, one of the few of this particular type remaining from a fleet constructed around the turn of the century.

*Sunday, September 24:* We awakened to the grind and rumble of ore unloading machinery, the ship having tied up alongside the B&O-NYC dock at Toledo during the night. Great buckets were digging steadily into the cargo, discharging it into strings of railroad cars placed directly alongside the vessel. Two bulldozers had even been brought on board, to be used in cleaning up each compartment so as to remove all the precious ore from the northern ranges.

We ate a hearty breakfast and shortly thereafter said goodbye to Captain Richardson, his officers and crew. We departed with a fuller realization of the vital importance of this fascinating business of lake transportation, not only to the economic well-being and defense of the United States, but to all members of the United Nations as a whole. The name "Life line of America" is certainly well-earned.





# The Ghost Port of Milan and a Druid Moon

By WALLACE B. WHITE

## PART II



IN 1847 Milan had three distilleries, three taverns, several pot houses and fourteen groceries each with a whiskey barrel in the back room. After the wheat had been sold and delivered and the annual list of necessities purchased, the frontier Ohio farmer and his helpers relaxed and "did the town."

In a sense, the yearly trek to Milan was a hegira from the deadly monotony and grinding toil of pioneer farm life. Men got away from small, family-crowded cabins and the irksome details of domesticity. Most of the women, of course, stayed at home. To their regular household duties, they had the added chores of the menfolk while they were away to market. A week was the very minimum of time allowed for the trip to Milan and return. However, a successful sale of the wheat meant taxes paid, indebtedness whittled down, and a year's supply of staples as well as little luxuries, needles, perhaps even a thimble, calico for clothing.

A few women, hardy Amazons, took their children and rode along with their husbands. Most of this type could handle four or six horses as well as a man. They could even, on occasion, put men to shame when it came to shouldering a mired wagon out of a spring hole. At evening when the wagons were out-spanned, you might see them seated on logs or handy stumps along the roadside, about them broods of youngsters, as much at home as young quail. Pots steam on the fire. Men from nearby outspanned wagons are passing and repassing. But they go through their domestic routines as unconcerned as though in the privacy of their own homes. A few years more and the far west will know this type —

vulgarly uncouth, mentally and morally tough fibered, but wholly capable of survival. Their male counterparts have been featured in history, but minor roles are usually accorded them.

This type is not the only touch of femininity on the road. Some wheat raisers have relatives living in and around Milan and take this opportunity to bring their families along on a visit. Their wagons are outspanned somewhat apart from the cruder elements. Often two or three groups camped together, building up a wall of reserve between themselves and an environment which their ethical codes rejected. Among such groups, all of the proprieties of their accustomed home life were observed. Grace preceded meals. Evening prayers were said and probably a chapter from the Bible read before retiring for the night. A few more years and this type, too, will begin their conquest of the West.

However, these cases of domesticity were few in the general picture of the wheat trek. The masculine motif predominated everywhere, in the rough and ready atmosphere of the campfires.<sup>1</sup>

Over the years during which wheat was carried to Milan, a procedural pattern had evolved. Men from various communities arranged to make the trip in groups or "companies." By so doing many benefits were secured. First, such a group could better protect itself against thieving and pilfering. Second, a group could overcome the obstacles of bad roads and unbridged streams better than an individual. And third, a group, having made preparations beforehand, could camp more handily along the road, and thus save money otherwise expended on lodging at taverns.

By the year 1847, a standard order of procedure had crystallized and had received a general tacit acceptance. The older hands, who had made the trip before and who knew how they had solved former problems, were given responsibilities in keeping with their abilities. A leader, or "captain," was usually in evidence. More likely than not, he owed his position to his proven ability, rather than to any formal vote, or indication of choice. He merely joined as one of the group and a majority of others deferred to him, forcing the rest to follow suit by example and weight of numbers. He usually arranged the order of the teams in the

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1. Based on letters of Hamilton Colton and Seneca Allen.

line, placing those having the better horses at intervals among the others, so that he had the power of some portion of the good animals at needed points at all times. How this worked will be seen when the method of crossing unbridged streams is described.

At the head of the line was usually a good six-horse team. When this had gotten its wagon across a stream safely, the horses were unhitched and taken back to the next three wagons, usually drawn by four horses, enough to pull the loaded vehicle over average ground. Two additional horses to each of these wagons now gave them six horses each, which enabled them to be drawn across the stream and up the steep bank of the other side. Immediately in back of the fourth wagon was another good six-horse conveyance. It came across under its own power, while the lead team was returned to their proper place at the head of the line. The first four wagons now went forward, while the second six-horse wagon helped three more four-horse wagons across; and so on, until all the group was over safely and plodding again toward Milan.

The advantages of the above method are apparent. First, it cut down the number of horses needed to move the entire group of wagons; and second, it accomplished stream crossings or got the group over bad spots in the road much more quickly than as if each wagon had functioned only as an individual unit.

The movement of individual as well as groups of grain wagons to market, presented a motley picture.

The eighteen or more thousand men who would participate in the trek were a true cross-section of early just-emerging-from-frontier Ohio. There was the better element of farmers whose sense of decorum, justice and fairplay served to restrain others. There was a rough and ready element from whose ranks captains, mates and wheelmen on the lakes and the rivers would be recruited. There was the rougher, roustabout element. Then, at the bottom, the floaters and ne'er-do-wells, a class into which Samuel Clemens (Mark Twain) dipped to fish up the father of Huckleberry Finn and others of that stripe. That there was less thievery and bold robbery of returning grain farmers than would appear possible is accounted for by the fact that most of the farmers were banded in groups and were a strong enough element to enforce a rough group-conditioned discipline.



Robberies and even murders there may have been, however, for legends tell of lone travellers killed quietly in taverns while they slept and their bodies disposed of in various ways, particularly in old wells. On the other hand, court records show little of this, but one must take into account the laxity and inefficiency of law enforcement in rural districts in those early days. Five inns within a ten-mile radius of Milan (they are private dwellings today) have traditions of murdered travellers connected with them. That there is no record or mention of organized robber bands probably is accounted for by the effective group organizations of the grain farmers. Certainly it cannot be shown that any local enforcement agencies were effective enough to cope with such a situation.

But to return to the Milan Canal Basin. In August, during the peak of the shipping season, some forty wagons an hour will be unloaded at the waterfront. Not all of these will utilize the warehouses. Some will use the old loading dock across the Canal Basin, located between Lots 97 and 100. The grain will be taken directly into schooners, at this point, or loaded on the lighter fleet of Rufus Curtis and carried down to Huron to vessels waiting there.

Henry Howe, in his *Historical Collections of Ohio*, says that as many as twenty vessels were moored in the Canal Basin at once during the grain shipping season. Howe visited Milan in 1846, and doubtless got his information first hand. Nevertheless this number appears a trifle high.

The Canal Basin, shaped like the head of a hockey stick, was about 1,200 feet long and varied in width from 120 feet at its head to 320 feet at its widest part. Roughly, its area was about 250,000 square feet. The average lake schooner of that day ranged from 100 to 120 feet long, 25 feet wide and drew between six and ten feet of water. They were two-masted and fore-and-aft rigged. Such a vessel would occupy about 2,500 square feet, besides the space required to maneuver her in and out the basin. Hence, twenty schooners appears to be too large a figure for ships occupying the basin at any one time. However, if, instead of twenty schooners of a gross tonnage of, say, 200 tons, we visualize five of this class and the rest of lesser capacity with a sprinkling of scows and lighters we may be able to get twenty handily into the Canal Basin at one time and still leave room for maneuvering.

The loading of these ships will continue around the clock. The average work-day was twelve hours in 1847. Unskilled labor was paid from

50 to 75 cents a day. A little free whiskey, brought out at the right time, will induce many to work extra hours without asking for more cash. Thus, at the peak of the season, it does not appear too extraordinary that thirty-five to fifty thousand bushels of wheat may have passed through the Port of Milan in a day—or that 600 wagon-loads were handled.

To illustrate ship movements in 1847 in the Canal Basin a day was chosen at random during the period of heavy wheat shipping. This day was then looked up in the records of the Collector of the Port of Milan and the arrivals noted. The departures for the next day were also noted. The following table will show the result.

ARRIVALS, PORT OF MILAN, AUG. 24, 1847.

<i>Ship</i>	<i>Master</i>	<i>Departure from</i>	<i>Cargo for Milan</i>
<i>Mink</i>	Frawley	Cleveland	15,000 lbs. Merchandise
<i>L. Wright</i>	Chase	Buffalo	ballast
<i>Sea-Gull</i>	Kline	"	6 ton Merchandise
<i>Monsoon</i>	Kelley	"	ballast
<i>Puritan</i>	Scoville	"	"
<i>Magnolia</i>	Bracy	"	"
<i>Dawn</i>	Hicks	Oswego	16 ton Merchandise
<i>Skinner</i>	Phillips	Pt. Burrell, Ont.	ballast

DEPARTURES, PORT OF MILAN, AUG. 25, 1847.

<i>Ship</i>	<i>Master</i>	<i>Destination</i>	<i>Cargo</i>
<i>Mink</i>	Frawley	Cleveland	6,023 bu wheat
<i>Magnolia</i>	Bracy	Buffalo	4,768 bu wheat (Wilbor & Ely)
			143 bbls flour
			20 " ashes
			2,659 bu wheat (Walker & Co.)
<i>Palestine</i>	Root	Buffalo	6,075 bu wheat
			540 bbls flour
<i>Puritan</i>	Scoville	Buffalo	6,290 bu wheat (Walker & Co.)
			17 bbls Timothy seed
			24 bbls ashes
			2,650 bu wheat (Wilbor & Ely)

From this table it will be seen that half the boats entering the Canal Basin on the 24th were not loaded by the 25th. A glance at the record, also, shows that there were several not loaded which had come on the 23rd. Thus, it may have been very possible that twenty vessels at one time were moored in the Canal Basin. For other commodities not mentioned above which were moved with the wheat see INLAND SEAS Vol. 6, No. 4, pp. 220-1, Winter, 1950.

After the wagons were emptied, they wound back up the hill, either by old Center Street, or by old Bank Street (this last came out at the Edison Birthplace). These wagons usually stopped in Milan to purchase their supplies. Many farmers sold part of their wheat for only enough ready cash to pay their taxes and settle pressing debts. For the remainder, they were given credit drafts on various local stores. The larger store-keepers in Milan had interests in the various warehouses and such credit was easily arranged. Farmers taking credit instead of cash usually received a slightly higher price for their wheat. Credit slips would also be honored by merchants or manufacturers other than those who gave the slip originally.

In addition to 14 general stores which handled a wide variety of merchandise, including whiskey, Milan also had two plow factories, a wagon works, five blacksmith shops, and three distilleries waiting eagerly to take their bite of the wheat dollar. The volume of trade during the wheat rush would run to several hundred thousand dollars in addition to that indicated by old records of the Port of Milan, since this last volume did not pass through the canal but was taken out of town directly by the wheat wagons.

Whiskey was the commodity in greatest demand. It was taken out both by the jug and the keg. Distilled spirits were cheap, from 50 to 75 cents a gallon, and were used in every home for medicinal purposes. The inner bark of the wild cherry placed in a jar of "spirits" made a favorite pioneer cough syrup. Whiskey and quinine was a common remedy for ague. In spring, diluted whiskey mixed with dandelion root, burdock and other "yarbs" made bitters for a tonic. Milan's distilleries did a thriving trade and at least two men founded their later fortunes in this business at Milan.

The Druid moon has now traversed a perceptible arc in the sky. The picture of the south side of Milan's old waterfront is nearly developed. There remain only odds and ends of detail to note in passing.

Halfway up the hill behind the Basin, between old Water Street and old Bank, another warehouse and accessory buildings materialize. These belong to Smith and Walker, also, according to tax rolls, and the larger is assessed at sixteen hundred dollars. You will find no trace of them today.



Down hill from them and slightly to the west (Texaco oil tanks occupy the spot today), was an open-faced shed which housed the old scales used in weighing wheat wagons. A track built on a trestle ran from them to the third story of the Nathan Jenkins' warehouse (owned by Walter Fisher, today) and a car traveled on this track and transported wheat from the wagons to the bins. Inside the warehouse these bins were arranged so that wheat moved by gravity from the rear of the building to the front where it was loaded directly on schooners. The old car may still be seen at the warehouse.

There is another building, which did not appear in the 1847 scene, but was erected in 1849. This was the old steam flour mill which stood just in back of Nathan Jenkins' warehouse, the foundation of which may be seen today.

Thomas and Samuel Winchester were the names of the first of a long list of millers to occupy this mill. Samuel earned the opprobrious designation of "the mad miller of Milan." He wanted to make a balloon and to this end he carried on a succession of expensive and, for years, futile experiments. In the early 1850's he set his mill on fire, trying to inflate his rubber-lacquered bag with hydrogen. Nearly everyone laughed at him. Only some of the Lockwoods advanced him money, while the neighbors all whispered about peculiarities which ran like a streak through that family. A small boy, named Thomas Alva Edison, was sent home and "hollered at" repeatedly for hanging around, peering through windows, open cracks of doors, anywhere which gave him sight of this mystifying research on the subject of buoyancy.<sup>2</sup>

Then, one day in the year 1855, to the surprise of everyone, Samuel Winchester brought his rubber-coated bag with its dangling basket to the Public Square and the thing worked. Samuel was borne aloft, sailing

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2. Young Thomas A. Edison apparently was hugely impressed by Winchester's balloon antics. In 1855, the Edisons had moved to Port Huron, Michigan, but a married sister of Tom's, Marion Edison Page, still lived on a farm near Fries Landing. Thomas A. must have heard of Winchester's fatal ascension, for about this time he persuaded a playmate, one Michael Oates, to take Seidlitz powders, on the theory that the powders by generating gas in Michael's body would cause him to arise like a balloon. Other things may have happened to Oates, but he did not rise. The experiment was another of Edison's early failures.

over Monroeville and Clyde, nearly to Fremont. Here, a wind current going in the opposite direction caught him and skidded him into a white ash tree near Hudson, Ohio. It was a great day for Samuel.

He disentangled his bag from the tree, brought it back to Milan, patched it, and October 2nd, 1855, made an ascension from Benedict's pasture, behind the Court House at Norwalk. A cheering crowd, a brass band and a cannon helped to mark the occasion.

"As the Balloon moved off," says the *Norwalk Experiment* in its weekly appearance October 9, 1855; "the Norwalk Brass Band discoursed soul-stirring music and the cannon sent forth heavy peals and the crowd cheered and the ladies waved their handkerchiefs. As far as Mr. Winchester could be seen, he was waving his flag . . . The wind was light . . . his course was east . . . We understand he was seen passing Berlinville . . ."

And this was the last ever seen of Samuel Winchester. Cleveland, Toledo, Buffalo and Philadelphia papers speculated as to his probable fate. Some would have him down in Lake Erie, others in the wilds of Canada, while still others, closer to the eastern coast of the United States, gave reasons why he might have perished in the Atlantic ocean. No one knew his fate. No one knows it, today.

*(To be continued)*

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# The Great Lakes, 1850-1861

By ANDREW T. BROWN

## PART III

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IN OUR OWN TIMES, many college students work on lake ships during the summers. At least one young man was doing this a century ago. James J. Hagerman, in his *Memoirs*,<sup>1</sup> describes himself as earning money for college during the summers of 1859-1861, as a clerk on ships carrying passengers west and copper or iron east. He mentions his second ship, the side-wheeler *Planet*, as new in 1861; it had cost \$120,000 to build, and that year netted its owner \$80,000. The depression, apparently, was over!

These ships were wooden. Men were discussing the use of steel hulls, and there was an all steel ship on the lakes in 1845 — the U. S. gunboat, *Michigan*. Nevertheless, the idea was still in its experimental stages, and steel hulls were not important on the lakes until after 1862.

By 1861, the lake shipping industry employed about 15,000 sailors; 6,000 more men were occupied in lake ports as ships' carpenters or caulkers. 1,166 ships in commission were worth nine and one-half million dollars. Under construction at the time were 32 sailing ships, 22 propellers, and only three side-wheelers. The decade had seen the building of 249 steamships of all kinds; during the forties, only 96 had been built. For the owners and builders of lake ships, as well as for those who travelled by way of them, the fifties were truly an era of expansion.

### THE COMMERCE

The term "commerce" as used here will refer to the shipment of goods, merchandise and raw materials. We shall consider chiefly four of the main items of lake commerce in the fifties: wheat, lumber, copper, and iron. Extensive material on the fishery industries for this period is apparently not available, although it was also important.

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1. Hagerman, "Memoirs of his Life, by Himself" (N. Mex., 1900), typescript in library of Western Reserve Historical Society.



The total value of lake commerce in 1850 was said to be \$186,000,000. This was the value of the goods carried, plus passenger fares. It does not include the cost of the ships. By 1860, this trade had recovered from the depression of 1857, and was running at a level of about \$600,000,000 annually. The increase reflected the growing importance of the Old Northwest generally as a producing region. An Ohio writer described the situation pretty accurately in Hunt's *Merchants' Magazine* in 1852, as follows: "The two best rail routes in the country are those between the Mississippi River and New York City, skirting the south shore of the lakes, and between the lakes and the Gulf of Mexico. These two lines run along the areas of heaviest settlement and the areas which produce the most diverse products."<sup>2</sup> The writer goes on to say that of the lake ports, Chicago and Toledo are to become the greatest. Toledo's advantage over Cleveland, he points out, is its better connection with Cincinnati, and its canal system in general. His prediction was wrong, of course, but his reasoning was good. He did not foresee the importance of Pittsburgh as a steel city, fed by Lake Superior ore, and the consequent importance of Cleveland as an ore port. Few people did in those days. Copper is continually discussed in the newspapers and trade journals, while iron comes in for only occasional mention.

The growing significance of lake trade did not escape southern observers. Speaking of the inland seas, a writer in DeBow's *Review*, 1854, wrote: "A single one of them even now presents a greater commerce than the whole Mediterranean."<sup>3</sup> Lake Erie had by far the greatest part of this trade. In the first place, nearly all the goods coming east went to Buffalo. In the second place, Lake Erie had four first-class ports, in Buffalo, Cleveland, Sandusky, and Toledo, plus several minor ones such as Ashtabula. In 1851, about sixty percent of the lake trade was Lake Erie trade. The percentage did not materially change during the decade. Lake Michigan was second, again because of its good ports, of which Chicago, Milwaukee, Racine, and Green Bay handled four-fifths of the commerce. Except for the growing importance of Detroit, Lake Huron served chiefly as a connecting link between Lakes Michigan and Erie. Lake Ontario had only one port of consequence, Oswego, and

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2. Hunt's *Merchants' Magazine*, vol. xxvii, Oct. 1852, pp. 438-455.

3. DeBow's *Review*, vol. xv, p. 359.

its trade remained relatively small. Lake Superior figures are not even given until after the opening of the St. Mary's canal in 1855.

The growth of lake trade is mirrored best in that of the port of Chicago. By 1833, only two vessels had visited it. Fourteen years later, Chicago was chosen as the meeting place for the Rivers and Harbors Convention. In another fourteen years, the Republican party would choose it as the spot to nominate its first winning candidate. The largest items in Chicago's early trade were lumber and grain. Until 1852, the lake carriers virtually monopolized this business. In that year began Chicago's activity as a rail center, and the lakes lost some of their former carrying trade, passengers and grain being the first "items" to shift to the railroads. Even so, the lake fleet involved in Chicago's trade doubled between 1851 and 1855. From 1852 to 1859, Chicago's receipts of lumber by water almost exactly doubled; receipts of merchandise increased eightfold. During the same period, her shipments of grain more than doubled, in spite of railroad competition.

For the historian of today, unquestionably the most important development in lake trade was the opening of Lake Superior. A note in Hunt's journal near the end of the decade 1859 says that until recently, only broken-down old ships had been sent to Lake Superior. Now, however, business there (especially with Cleveland) is so important as to call for only the best steamers and propellers. The contributor of this note still does not stress the importance of iron. By the time of his writing, Cleveland had received from Lake Superior almost three million dollars worth of copper, and only a little over a thirtieth of that in iron.

Grain was the first commodity of lake trade to be carried in bulk. The two great shipping points of grain were Chicago and Milwaukee, between which towns there raged a fierce competition for the grain produce of the west and northwest. Eventually, Milwaukee won and in 1862 became the greatest grain market in the world, but during our period Chicago remained the leader. Wheat had first been shipped from Chicago in 1839. The next year 100,000 bushels went from there to Buffalo, and a year later the supply was sufficient to cause the erection in Buffalo of its first grain elevator. By the end of our decade the figure of this shipment was 28,000,000 bushels. A large part of this grain came from Wisconsin, hence the competition of Milwaukee. Immigration during the fifties had increased the improved land in Wisconsin by

260 percent, and most of it went toward raising wheat. During the fifties, United States wheat production as a whole jumped from about 100,000,000 bushels to 175,000,000; Wisconsin accounted for fifteen percent of the gain. To illustrate dramatically the phenomenal growth of the grain trade, we need only look at the career of a Milwaukee citizen of the time. One impoverished Daniel Newhall borrowed \$300 in 1846, which he invested in the wheat market. In the course of the next decade, he became the owner of a fleet of twenty ships carrying grain on the lakes! Philip D. Armour, of later meat-packing fame, also got his start as a commission merchant in Great Lakes grain.

While Milwaukee was second to Chicago in wheat shipped, Toledo was second in total volume of grain, shipping annually large amounts of corn, oats, and barley, which were raised in Ohio, and Indiana. Minnesota wheat did not enter the market until 1858, the year of the State's first agricultural surplus. By 1860, Minnesota was shipping roughly 2,000,000 bushels of wheat annually to Chicago and Milwaukee. Already in 1857, two American cities, Buffalo and Chicago, were the greatest grain depositories in the world, ahead of Archangel, which was third. The depression of 1857 cut into lake grain commerce, but the business apparently revived quickly, 1858 showing a 33 percent increase in grain shipments over 1857.

Lumber was another important item in the lake trade of the fifties. Milling had begun in the early thirties in Michigan, but the panic of '37 halted it. Then in the forties, the Maine pineries became exhausted. Many Maine lumbermen bought pine land in Michigan. The industry grew rapidly; in 1853, it was important enough to get a Michigan court decision that any stream with a "floatage capacity" was navigable, and therefore could not be impeded by land-owners along the banks! The introduction of the circular saw in 1857 jumped the average mill output from 1,000 feet per day to one-quarter of that every minute. United States lumber production almost doubled in the fifties. At the same time, the value of the northwestern output increased almost fourfold. One of DeBow's writers prophesied, "The pineries of Wisconsin now control, and will soon hold exclusive possession of the market of the valleys of the Mississippi and its great western affluents."<sup>4</sup>

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4. DeBow's *Review*, vol. xiv, March, 1853, p. 235.





LOUIS CARLTON SABIN, 1867-1950. Photograph by courtesy of the Lake Carriers' Association, Cleveland, Ohio. (See page 60.)

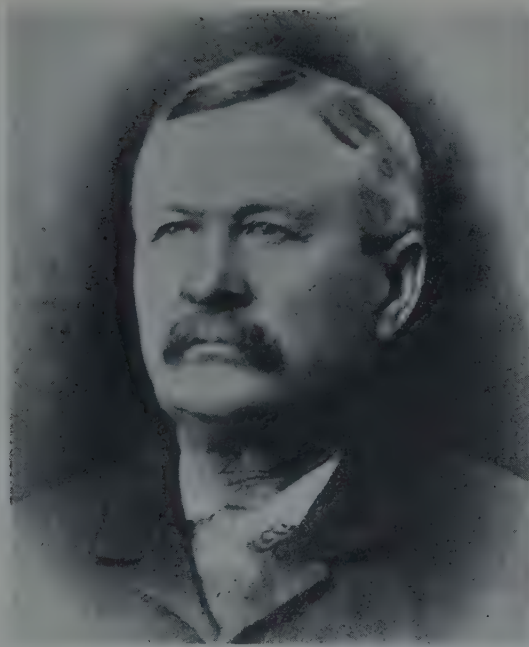


WOODEN FREIGHTER *Helena*.



WOODEN FREIGHTER *Chauncy Hurlbut*.

Photographs from the Eugene Herman Memorial Collection, Great Lakes News.  
Reproductions are the gift of A. E. Williams, Lorain, Ohio, to the  
Great Lakes Historical Society.



CAPTAIN GEORGE W. STODDARD, Master of the *Dean Richmond*. Photograph by courtesy of C. J. Dow. (See page 41.)



THE *Dean Richmond* at Buffalo, N. Y., about 1870. Photograph by courtesy of C. J. Dow. (See page 41.)





PHOTOGRAPH of the *John Ericsson* of Midland by Clarence Berg of Racine, Wisconsin, from a gift of 150, to the Great Lakes Historical Society.



OLD OIL PAINTING in the Milan Public Library of the *M. Stalker*, built at Milan in 1863. Photograph by courtesy of P. A. Ewell. (See page 21.)



THE CARFERRY *Milwaukee Clipper*, rebuilt in 1941 on hull of the Anchor Line cruise ship *Juniata*. Photograph by Clarence Berg.



THE *Juniata*, later rebuilt as the *Milwaukee Clipper*. Photograph from Mitchell and Company's (later Green's) Great Lakes Directory, 1913.

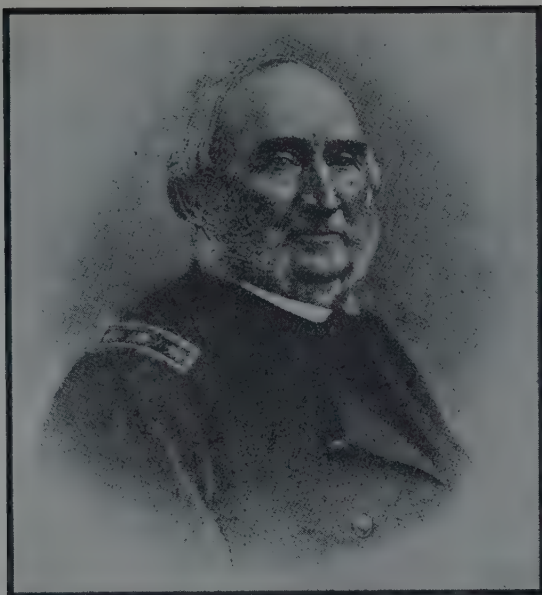


FUNNEL of the *Howard M. Hanna, Jr.* Photograph by Lawrence A. Pomeroy, Jr.  
(See page 13.)



SECOND MATE CARL NEUNDORFER in the pilot house. Photograph by Lawrence A. Pomeroy, Jr., Cleveland, Ohio. (See page 15.)





CAPTAIN DOUGLAS OTTINGER, 1804-1899. Reproduction by courtesy of Captain W. L. Morrison. (See page 63.)



U. S. REVENUE CUTTER *Perry*. Photograph by courtesy of Captain W. L. Morrison. (See page 63.)



MOTOR TANKER *Martha E. Allen* at Cleveland harbor entrance, 1936. One of a collection of 75 photographs presented to the Great Lakes Historical Society by Carl McDow, Cleveland, Ohio.



## The Dean Richmond

By C. J. Dow



THE CALMS AND GALES of fifty-seven years have come and gone since that wild night in October 1893, when the *Dean Richmond* caught in the fury of an autumn gale, foundered with all on board off Van Buren Point in the east end of Lake Erie. Nineteen of the crew, eighteen men and one woman, found watery graves.

Named to honor Dean Richmond, president of the New York Central Railroad, the propeller, a package freighter, was built in Cleveland by Quayle in 1864. She was 235 feet in length and was of the old-fashioned arch type prevalent upon the Great Lakes 75 years ago. Owned in Port Huron, she was under charter when lost to the Clover Leaf Railroad, trading between Buffalo and Toledo. Most of Friday, October 13th, 1893, she was taking on cargo at Toledo, and about this cargo a great deal of wild speculation has arisen since the *Richmond* was lost. She is said to have been loaded with copper and an extravagant newspaper article of last winter, from the *Cleveland Plain Dealer* of January 1950, placed the value of it at \$700,000. That would make the missing propeller a veritable treasure ship, awaiting the coming of the salvage crew. The cold facts, however, are at variance with this. The *Richmond* carried flour, bagged meal, oil cake, light merchandise and probably between one and two hundred tons of pig zinc, coming to Toledo by rail from the zinc fields in Missouri. (Rumor has changed the zinc to copper and a few tons to a full shipload.)

Sailed by George W. Stoddard the ill-fated ship left Toledo on that afternoon of Friday the 13th, for Buffalo and hit heavy weather soon after reaching the open lake from the river. Her chief engineer and part owner, John Hogan, marked off for this trip. He wanted to attend the World's Fair in Chicago, and was replaced by Frank Hilton, a relative, who lived in Port Huron. Young Hilton, but 27, had just re-



covered from a serious and protracted illness. He had been off the lakes for weeks, and to oblige Mr. Hogan, signed on for this trip. In doing so, he made a rendezvous with Death.

Saturday morning, October 14th, found the *Dean Richmond* slowly fighting her way through heavy seas, and little more is known of her movements that day until mid afternoon. The wind, southwest, was now blowing about sixty miles an hour. The lake was white with foam and waves were high and powerful. An up-bound steamer sighted the wallowing freighter abreast of Erie. One of the *Richmond's* stacks had been blown away and she was even then having a tough time. Almost at dusk, she was sighted by the up-bound *Helena*. By this time, both stacks were gone and the stricken ship, now at the absolute mercy of the sea, was apparently trying to get under the shelter of Long Point. But what mercy is there in the heart of Lake Erie when she is tormented by a sixty-mile wind? Passing from the vision of the *Helena*, the *Dean Richmond* was never seen again. The only word from her, the first and last, was in her wreckage which strewed the beach that next morning, Sunday, October 15th. Flour, upper-works, bedding, pails, yawl boat, lined the shore from Van Buren Point, east, to Dunkirk; and while nothing could be found to identify the lost ship, life belts later revealed her name.

At about 7:00 A. M. that Sunday morning Frank Boling, a farmer living on the south shore of the lake, went down to the water to view the fury of the waves. His eyes fell upon a mass of wreckage, and prowling into it he came upon the body of a young man. In life he had been Andrew Dodge, a member of the *Richmond's* galley crew. Fully dressed, he had perished either from exposure or from a wound found in his skull when the waves had doubtless hurled him into the "rock-bounds" at the water's edge. In a pocket was found a letter from a young lady in Michigan telling him that she would be prepared to accompany him to a dance the coming Saturday night.

Mr. Boling dug deeper into the wreckage and found the body of Walter Goodyear, first mate, native of Sylvania, Ohio. His watch was stopped at 12:20, probably the time the mate took to the water. More about this watch later.

The storm began to abate and by late afternoon was no longer dangerous. This made it possible for men in small craft from Silver Creek,

about eight miles east, to get out, and when they did they came across a fully clothed and life-belted body. It was that of Captain Stoddard. His watch was also stopped at 12:20, the time when he too doubtless took to the water, and very close, we may assume, to the time the *Richmond* made her plunge to the floor of the lake. Through that day and early evening more bodies were either washed ashore or found floating in the lake. Never, however, was one found of the engine crew, who must be sleeping out their eternity in the engine room of the sunken wreck.

I have tried to picture the scene. Both stacks were gone when the *Dean Richmond* vanished from the sight of man, and that would seriously hamper efforts to keep up steam. I believe that the entire after crew were toiling and straining in their efforts to keep the ship in motion, heading for Long Point. I know from what reputable men in Toledo have told me that the ship had a damaged rudder when she left there, and I feel certain that the lack of steam and steerage rendered the ship helpless and that she drifted wherever the seas would send her, until about midnight. It was exactly on the stroke of twelve that the wind suddenly veered to the northwest and I think a sudden rush of water from the northwest struck her stern and put her down. The engine crew had no chance at all to get away and that is the reason why not a body from that part of the ship ever came ashore. I think Captain Stoddard and Mate Goodyear left the ship from the bow, both going over when the stern sank. In the darkness and fury of the gale the men became separated, neither to drown but to die of exposure. Why their bodies would be found eight miles apart is one of the unexplained quirks of a storm. Goodyear, a young man, might have fought his way toward shore, while Captain Stoddard, a man of 54, doubtless soon succumbed to the cold and buffeting of the waves. It is firmly established that one man from the *Dean Richmond* came ashore alive. His name was Wheeler, he was in the early twenties, and his body was found that Sunday morning west of Dunkirk. He, too, had struggled to get ashore and succeeded. He came out of the lake, took off his life belt, staggered inland beyond the reach of the water and then died. Thus faded from mankind the knowledge of what took place that wild October night.

When Wheeler's father came to Dunkirk to arrange for burial of his son, he made inquiries about the son's watch. Coroner Charles Blood told him no watch was found. Robbery was suspected until the father

of Walter Goodyear disclaimed all knowledge of a watch found on his son's body. The solution was simple, Wheeler had let Goodyear take his watch, a gift from his father on his twenty-first birthday. Both men had too much to think of the night before to worry about a watch exchange.

Quite a few of the crew of the *Dean Richmond* lived in Toledo and one family there, that of a Mr. Ernst, was hard hit by this tragedy. He lost two sons whose bodies never were recovered. For years he vainly hoped the wreck might be found and their bodies removed. He is said to have carried with him enough funds to go to Dunkirk upon receipt of word, day or night. It was not until twenty years later that he gave up the futile hope and resigned himself to the thought that both sons must sleep forever in the lake.

In the winter of 1893-94 plans were formulated to find the wreck the coming summer, and that attempt in 1894 was the first of many efforts to obtain the tonnage of zinc. But the *Dean Richmond* was destined to be an elusive quarry and Davy Jones never has yielded up the secret of her resting place. Dunkirk fishermen, from time to time, have set nets over lost ships and brought in wreckage but nothing to identify it.

I have two pieces of material in my collection, one of which, a chair from the engine room, came from the *Richmond*. That is positive, for it was taken from the lake the morning after the sinking. The second I cannot positively identify but am inclined to believe it is the compass she carried. Investigation strongly suggests that I am right. In 1903, fishermen pulling nets from eight feet of water off Van Buren Point, found entangled in their twine what seemed to be a large ball of blue clay. They were about to throw it back into the lake when one of them suggested that they see what it really was. Turning a stream of water upon it, the mud fell away and revealed the bottom part of a compass box with the compass inside. With the compass and box were two other objects, a piece of a fire extinguisher and a man's shoe with the foot bones in it. One of the fishing crew took the compass home and in later years I bought it. It bears the name of its maker, Richey, Boston, Massachusetts, and it was made in 1871. Richey informed me that it was sold in 1871 to Vosburgh and Baker of Buffalo.



There the trail ends and from now on we surmise. In October of 1871 the *Dean Richmond* was seriously damaged by fire in Mud Lake and her upper works destroyed. She was then sailed, I believe, by Captain "Jim" Pratt. One life was lost. The hull, towed to Buffalo, was turned over to the Union Dry Dock Company who rebuilt her. It would be only natural to get a new compass, which could be bought from Vosburgh and Baker, and I believe that is what was done. The pilot house of the *Richmond* was smashed away by the heavy seas and certainly the compass could easily have found its way to the bottom. This could have taken place long before she finally foundered. The compass, when pulled from the lake, still contained the spirit, but the drying of the gasket afterward let in air and the fluid evaporated. The box is still tight, its mitered corners still holding perfectly. All varnish or paint has disappeared, and the cover was missing when brought to the surface. Only a thin thread held it as it was raised from the darkness of the lake bottom to the sunlight above. How fortunate that Clarence Bacon, one of the fishing crew, saved it from being tossed back into the lake!

Will the wreck ever be found? I doubt it, although a friend of mine claims that he has definite knowledge of its location and has twice in the past three years been over it. He states it is in 26 fathoms of water, about five miles out and a little west of Van Buren Point. It is significant that no wreckage ever came ashore WEST of that place. His contention is that during all these years, every searcher has dragged too far in and not far enough out in the lake. My opinion is that this is true. With a southwest wind blowing until midnight, it would have had a tendency to keep the ship away from shore. Yet I have questioned that theory. If five miles out, could bodies be ashore at daylight, even though the wind had gone northwest? I confess I cannot answer that.

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# Recollections of the Great Lakes 1874-1944

By LAUCHLEN P. MORRISON

## PART IX

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### EARLY SOO DAYS

**T**HE SAULT WAS A GOING PLACE when the first white man visited this portion of the Great Lakes system. There are two towns of this name now existing in the United States and Canada, the full form being Sault Ste. Marie, shortened to the Soo. The Soo Locks are known world wide. The prosperous small cities are situated at the foot of the Sault rapids, some 10 to 12 miles below the lower end of Lake Superior. They are cities with a variety of industries, but the main one is the locking of ships. Day and night for nine months in the year great ships are raised or lowered some 22 feet from the Lake Superior level to the Lake Huron level.

When the first French voyagers arrived at the Soo they found a thriving village of Chippewa Indians engaged in fishing. The whitefish, one of the most prized edible swimmers of the fish family, congregated in great numbers to rest and recuperate before making the strenuous passage of the rapids on their road to Lake Superior to spawn. The Indians had invented a dip net with a long handle and a scoop or net about four feet in diameter. With two men in a canoe they would proceed to the foot of the rapids, seek the eddy of some obstruction above and shove the net out into the swift waters. The net, aided by the current, would be swept rapidly downward and the fish would be caught. A dexterous twist of the handle closed the opening and the fish was rapidly swung into the canoe. Often several fish were caught in one sweep. Sometimes, however, no fish were caught. But on the whole the average was good and in an hour or two the canoe would return laden with beautiful fish weighing from two to seven pounds. The squaws would take the catch, scale, clean and behead the fish. Those that were not needed for

immediate consumption were smoked, dried and stored for the fishless days of the long northern winter.

The Indian did not use salt for preserving, although he must have known all about it as there were numerous salt licks and springs throughout all of his hunting grounds where he waited for the deer and moose that knew and used the salt. It may be that the Indian did not like salt, but soon after the advent of the white trapper it became a matter of barter between them, Indians trading pelts for salt.

The Sault was a natural place for the location of a trading post. All traffic to and from the great trapping areas around and along the shores of Lake Superior had to pause and portage at the Sault. It was also a natural resting place before making the long trip to the vicinity that is now Port Arthur. Port Arthur itself did not come into existence until many years later. It is probable that the area around the Nipigon river was better known than Port Arthur as this area was a big fur producer when the Hudson Bay company took over the fur trade many years later. This same area is still producing many fine furs today.

My first recollection of the Soo is locking down the old State two-step lock on the *Manitoba*. I do not recall the locks on my first trip down from Lake Superior in the fall of 1875. On this first remembered trip I recall being greatly interested in watching the ship sink down to the lower level and the dock hands push on the great wooden levers that opened the gates. I also watched with interest the steward taking aboard a great basket of prime whitefish.

One of the items that fascinated me was the name of one of the streets of the Soo, Portage avenue. This street ran from the Lake Huron level to the Lake Superior level so the name clearly suggested its original use. What had been portaged was in no way evident, but investigation and conversation with some of the old timers cleared the matter. The need of stalwart ships was critical on Lake Superior and as there was little or no available timber suitable for ship building at or near the Soo, it was decided to portage a ship already in commission from the Lake Huron level where they were quite plentiful, to the Lake Superior level. I was unable to ascertain the name of this vessel but I did find out that the steamer *Independence* was the first and as far as I know, the only steamer so handled. This small steamer, probably 75 to 80 feet long, was hauled out near the foot of the rapids. A cradle was built around



her and during the winter was rolled up hill to the upper level where she was launched the next spring. Thus was initiated steam travel on the last of the Great Lakes to be so invaded. Her career was not a long one. In 1853 her boiler blew up and she sank not far from the point where she entered the lake, after having made several trips.

I personally knew one of the crew who was aboard at the time of the explosion and who was carried over the Soo rapids on a bale of hay. It is said he never laughed after his experience. I never saw him laugh in public, but one of the superintendents, Charlie Spalding, liked to get hold of a good funny story and tell old man Stiles, for such was his name. Old Stiles would look Charlie solemnly in the face and say, "Yes, Charlie," but would never smile. If the story was a good one, however, we would watch Old Stiles sneak away behind one of the machinery shelters. When he reappeared he had all the earmarks of a man who had had a good hearty laugh.

I was in charge of the operations that finally removed the wreck of the *Independence*. She sank after the explosion on a shoal less than two miles above the Soo rapids. As the boats continued to increase their draft, the Vidal Shoal came to constitute a menace to navigation and had to be removed. Early in this operation a wreck was found and the evidence soon proved it to be the *Independence*. The propeller was saved and today constitutes a valued relic of the Soo locks. This wheel was a curious article indeed and it was a long fetch from the modern propeller. It looked more like the rim of one of the first tractor wheels, with a circular rim about two and one half feet in diameter, and about ten inches on the face. On this face were riveted several flanges set at an angle so that when the rim was revolved the flanges pushed the boat forward. Crude today, but what an advance over the big paddle wheels of the steamships of that day. Their huge paddle wheel boxes, in a strong head, used from 20% to 50% of the entire power of the engines.

The *Independence* was loaded with goods for barter with the Indian fur trappers and we got many curious mementos. There were round wooden match boxes filled with old sulphur matches, the smell of the sulphur still strongly evident. There were brass rings that had been gilt at one time, beads of all sizes and colors as well as nine bottles of Indian trade whiskey. Terrible stuff I know, for I sampled it.

I got two bottles of this so called whiskey, and I let the word get about that I had some whiskey 44 years old at least. I asked a few of my friends to a dinner intimating that I would serve some of the liquor. I had no refusals to my party. After ascertaining the favorite tippie of these friends in the whiskey line, I carefully removed the ancient green sealing wax from the rescued liquor, emptied the bottle and filled it with the best brand I could purchase, then resealed with the ancient wax.

Before the dinner was served I brought forth the treasured bottle, which I allowed my friends to examine. Then I removed the wax in the presence of all and poured each member of the conclave a stiff jolt. I can hear today the sips of appreciation and awed expressions of "44 years old." "Some whiskey, boy!" The whole party was so entranced with the age of the beverage that they overlooked the fact that the liquor had been in glass all the time, and whiskey does not improve with age when stored in glass. They were all cognizant of this fact but completely forgot for the time being, or else were the most courteous guests that ever graced a dinner table.

The old oaken timbers that constituted the framework of the *Independence* were jet black from the effect of the iron fastenings of the ship and perhaps aided too by the sulphur of the matches. I had a number of canes made for souvenirs and presented to my friends. I kept one for myself which was afterward stolen. They were as black as ebony and took a beautiful polish. Colonel C. S. Riche of the United States Engineer Corps carried one for years and valued it very highly.

In clearing out an old Hudson Bay warehouse that the United States had acquired for additional landing piers, I ran across many amusing and interesting things recorded in the old files of the Hudson Bay Company. We were in a hurry at the time and I probably overlooked many valuable mementos but one or two I remember well. The Astor Fur Company built a schooner, *John Jacob Astor*, at the Soo for traffic on Lake Superior. I ran into the time book of the man engaged in the building of the boat. One item read as follows:

Jean Coddott	1 day
Jean Coddott	1/2 "
Jean Coddott	drunk again.

The names of these workmen are still current family names of many of the older and respected families of the Soo.

Among the things, I found an old manifest that amused me. The name of the head man of a flotilla of ten boats and 40 men was the same as my own even to the initial, L. Morrison. The manifest was a study in the habits of the old Hudson Bay factors. These men may have been isolated but they lived the life of Riley just the same. The manifest consisted for a considerable part of champagne, brandy and wine, all of the highest quality and included cigars and tobacco, laces and fancy dress goods along with ordinary stores and trade goods such as whiskey, rum, coffee, tea, beads, muskets, blankets, tomahawks, tools and axes. Truly, a varied cargo!

Too bad the records were so poorly appreciated. Had they been carefully kept what a novel could be written of old loves and old hates, the hair-raising adventures that were certainly as wild as the most vivid of the pulp magazines of today. History was written in these records and for the lack of an appreciative mind, was discarded as paper junk.

#### LATER MEMORIES OF THE SOO

For many years, from 1875-1892, I was an alien from the Sault. I was busy attending school and college preparing myself for my life work. I had elected to become a civil engineer and graduated in 1891 with sufficient credentials to warrant my following this line of work. In the interim, between the half yearly doses of intellectual fodder, I spent my holidays acting as nursemaid to a number of cows and horses, and in keeping the rust from the blade of a hoe, thus building up muscles and stamina to last me through my life. The work was hard but interesting. Living conditions were good. On the completion of my school education I looked the situation over and as I had always been interested in shipping I thought I could see a good field in that line of work. I had ascertained that the United States was contemplating extensive work in that line, so I sent in an application for a position. To my delight and surprise I was successful on my first cast and in April, 1892, was duly appointed as a junior civilian engineer in the War Department of the United States. The field became my life work and I remained in it until I reached the age of retirement.

The Soo, when I first reported, was still somewhat primitive. Outside communication was bad except in the summer. The stores stocked up



in the late fall and these supplies had to last until the opening of navigation the following spring. The blast of the first steamboat whistle started a minor Mardi Gras. The town went wild. Everybody flocked down to the landing pier and welcomed the incoming packet. Then followed feasting galore with pork, tea, coffee and red liquor reigning supreme for days to come. Turkey or chicken, what are they to a good serving of genuine salt pork after a continued diet of salt trout and whitefish varied with an occasional dish of snowshoe rabbit. The lowly pig is a noble beast. Beans and sowbelly were the staple diet of the hardiest men the country ever produced — the lumberjacks.

My first assignment on joining the survey force of the War Department was to the Hay Lake channel. Hay Lake prior to the attention of the department was a beautiful expanse of water protected at both ends by shoal water. The upper end flowed through a number of narrow, intricate channels, forming a group of beautiful wooded islets. The soil was good and the ground level. The trees were principally sugar maples, white birch, elms and a smattering of evergreen, principally spruce. The whole layout was quite beautiful but unappreciated until it was found the new channel would pass through these islands. They were then snapped up like nylon stockings at a bargain counter. Summer cottages were built and a very delightful colony was quickly formed.

Hay Lake when I first saw it was virgin territory. The shores were wooded down to the highwater mark. It was quiet, well sheltered and as enticing as a newly made pumpkin pie. It was known only to a few rod and line fishermen so was teeming with fish. There were perch up to 12 inches long and plenty of Great Northern pike. After our day's work on the survey, or in our spare time, we fished and took fish without number. We started early keeping pools on the catch. The rule was that the fish had to be five inches or over for a tally, must be caught on a single hook line, landed and strung on a storage line through the gills without injury to the fish. The holder of the largest tally for the prescribed time, usually each day, won the money. At the end of the match the fish were turned loose and the ones that did not immediately disappear were scooped in and dressed for the survey boat larder. Good cold-water, fresh-caught perch have, in my opinion, got everything else beat in the piscatorial line.

It was not long, however, until the dredges at Little Rapids, the upper end, soon opened a channel through the islands and traffic began to flow into Hay Lake area. Where a few months before not a single house had decorated the shores of the lake, now light draft scows soon brought timber and the building of farm houses, barns and summer homes followed the flag into the new area.

Gasoline launches which were making their first appearance about this time, were bringing down picnic parties and fishing parties. Camping sites were plentiful, as was good wood, and at night cheerful camp fires could be seen scattered along the shores while boisterous and happy campers made the evening merry. Exploring new and untried territory surely makes a most entrancing experience. I do not think I ever put in a more pleasant season in my life than that first summer on the St. Mary's river. Of course there were a few mosquitoes but their season was short. They had all come and gone by the middle of July. The climate was ideal and the nights were short as it was daylight until nine p. m. and daylight again at three a. m. Dawn to dusk was a long day indeed.

The fishing was good and well scattered. There were no automobile roads to the shores of the lake so the fishing continued at top production. The grounds were distant for small craft so fishing is still fairly good to this day. The area was proscribed against commercial fishing and nets so the chances are that it will continue good. Deer, porcupine and wild cats were frequently seen and taken in season. An occasional bear was encountered. Two were taken the first summer by the survey party alone, and in rare cases beaver were seen, but they soon deserted their dam when they became zoological exhibits.

How different today. Now day and night great steamships are plowing their way both directions, crossing these beautiful tranquil waters. But such is the so-called march of progress.

An amusing incident occurred this first summer on Hay Lake. One of the government employees became enamoured of the cook of the dredge on which he was the inspector. During the operation of the dredge, a mud scow bumped into it on the opposite side from where Rosy, the cook, was standing too near the rail. Only there was no rail and the shock threw her overboard. Her lover, who was near at the

time, had a speech impediment and could not sound certain letters. So he stood on the deck shouting at the top of his voice, "Quim, Wosy, Quim." Meaning of course, "Swim, Rosy, Swim." In the meantime a more level-minded man of the crew threw "Wosy" a life ring with a line attached and she was safely pulled back onto the deck. What might have been a tragedy became instead an item for the Sunday comics.

Among my treasured memories of the Soo is the friendship I made with one man whom I had the pleasure of serving under at one time while he was in the service of the United States. Mr. L. C. Sabin probably did more to straighten out and classify the jumbled records of early lakes shipping than any other man. He was much too valuable a man to continue long as an engineer of the War Department and was taken comparatively early by the Lake Carriers' Association to be their guiding genius.

*(To be continued)*

## The Great Lakes in Niles' National Register

CONTINUING publication of excerpts about the Great Lakes  
taken from America's leading news magazine during the years  
1811 to 1849.

—The Editor.

### Lakes Erie, Huron and Michigan

**L**AKE ERIE OVERFLOWING. From some unknown cause, the water in this lake has been rising for about three years. During which time, it has risen nearly 3 feet; and according to its natural motion, will continue to rise during the summer. The Niagara River, rising in proportion to this increased supply of water from the western world, by the rapidity of its current, is rendered more difficult to pass. We have not heard the opinion of any gentleman of science on the subject, qualified to investigate the cause, or give any probable conjecture as to the source from whence it may spring. May it not arise from the improvement of the lands lying on the margin of lake Erie, admitting a more free passage of the water in its tributary streams? (*Buffalo Gazette*, May 2.)

*Niles' Register*, May 20, 1815, vol. 8, p. 203.

Kingston (Canada) March 29.—On Monday last the bay of Kingston was entirely free from ice, but on Tuesday morning it was completely shut up with *new* ice, as far up as the Nine Mile Point, a circumstance not recollected to have occurred before, in this province, by the oldest settlers now resident in Kingston.

*Niles' Register*, May 20, 1815, vol. 8, p. 203.

Buffalo, Lewistown, Black Rock and Manchester are rapidly rising from their ashes.

*Niles' Register*, August 12, 1815, vol. 8, p. 416.

*Westward!* The *Buffalo Gazette* says, that since the opening of the spring, scarcely a day has passed without the editor's witnessing the passage of several families from New-England, through that village for the state of Ohio.

*Niles' Register*, August 12, 1815, vol. 8, p. 420



## *Ancient Naval Fight on Lake Erie*

Or A Piece of Wyandott History.

[*Communicated by* STANLEY GRISWOLD, ESQ.]

During my residence at Detroit, I had the following story from the chiefs of the Wyandott nation, (called by the French Hurons) and principally from Walk-in-the-Water, a man of superior penetration and eloquence.

Near 200 years ago, as well as I could recollect, their nation resided on the north shore of Lake Ontario, and the St. Lawrence River. Opposite to them, on the south side of these waters, resided the Senecas. A woman, as happened among other nations, was the cause of a terrible war between them, which terminated in the expulsion of the former from the country. She was the wife of one of the Seneca chiefs, to whom the Wyandott prince took a strong liking, and by stratagem carried her off.

The war immediately ensued, and was prosecuted with great cruelty and slaughter for a long time. At last a final battle came on (upon the northern territory) in which the Wyandotts were worsted and were obliged to fly with great rapidity. The greater part took a course to the west, and their antagonists followed them vigorously till they came to the streights of lake Huron and St. Clair. The fugitives calculated to pass on the ice, but found it just broken up and then floating down the streight. Their only alternative was to throw themselves upon it, and leaping from cake to cake they all safely reached the opposite shore. Their pursuers not chusing to encounter the risk, returned home.

The nations among whom the Wyandotts now found themselves, viz., the Potawattomies, Ottawas, Chippewas, received them with friendship, and gave or lent them land to settle on. At the solicitation of the strangers, they even went so far as to fit out a fleet of large and excellent birch canoes with a view to meet the Senecas whom they expected on with a fleet from the east. These canoes were chiefly built on the streights and higher lakes, and came to a rendezvous about where Malden now is. It is said they made a grand show. The Senecas not having as good materials, were obliged to make use of log canoes, hollowed out of the trunks of trees. These were far more clumsy and unmanageable than those made of the birch bark; the latter being superior to our best skiffs and may safely brave the surges of the lakes.

The Wyandotts and their allies set out from their rendezvous, coasting the north side of lake Erie till they came to Long Point, within 20 or 30 miles of the eastern end of the lake. Here they made a halt, not deeming it prudent to double the point till they had looked around it. For this purpose they dispatched a few men across the point, who happened to meet midway, with about the same number of the enemy, dispatched for a similar object. Each party retreated to their fleet, except one or two Wyandotts, who ascended trees to ascertain the situation and number of their enemy and the nature of their craft, which they found to be logs.

Now a grand manoeuvre was set on foot—the birch canoe party proceeded to the end of the point, and in full view of their enemy, put out directly into the lake. The Senecas immediately pursued, and when they had reached about midway of the lake the birch canoes turned upon them and gave them such battle as could not be withstood. All the Senecas were slain but one man, who pretended to be dead, but was afterwards found alive, and was permitted to go home to tell the catastrophe to his nation.

Thus closed the war, and the Wyandotts remained in peace in their new station. This is supposed to have been the first naval action on the lakes.

Several circumstances conspire to gain credit to this relation.

One is the inveterate prejudice and hatred existing between the Wyandotts and Senecas to this day. The cause of this hatred has recently assumed other forms than the ancient war; the former accuse the latter of administering bad medicine, by which they mean a kind of inexplicable witchcraft or conjuration. But since the Genessee country and New Connecticut have been settled by the whites, there has not been much connection between them. The above circumstance, however, may go some way to account for the readiness of the Indian tribes in the Genessee country (or the Six Nations of whom the Senecas are a part) to unite in the present war against the British and their allies . . .

Again, I have often heard the chiefs of those nations by whom the Wyandotts were so hospitably received and assisted, upbraid the latter, in their anger, of want of gratitude—telling them they were strangers and they took them in, that the ground occupied by them was theirs, &c. (*Nat. Int.*)

*Niles' Register*, October 14, 1815, vol. 9, p. 113-114.

## Marine Intelligence of Other Days

### WATER SPOUTS

Several very large water spouts were seen to form and burst on the lake yesterday. They attracted a great deal of notice and made, as they moved over the water, a magnificent appearance.

—*Chicago Daily Democrat*, May 8, 1849.

### BOW PROPELLER

An iron steamer with Ericsson's propeller at the bow was to leave Coenties slip, New York, recently for Oswego.

—*Chicago Express*, November 25, 1842.

### EARLY LAKE NEWS

The schooner *Austerlitz* (134 tons), Captain Smith, Master, from Buffalo arrived at this port on the 18th Inst, freighted with a full cargo of merchandise, etc., for the citizens of this village; and cleared on the 21st in ballast.

—From the first issue of the *Chicago Democrat*, the first newspaper published in Chicago, Tuesday, November 26, 1833.

—Captain John.

### WINTER NAVIGATION IN 1850

Although navigation has not closed for the year 1850, it is closing fast. The Rideau Canal is shut up; the Montreal mail boats have ceased running; and the mails thereto are transmitted by stage. Some barges and perhaps a freight steamer or two yet remain to go down. On the lake there is yet some steamboat transit. On Monday the *Princess Royal* went up to Toronto. On Wednesday the *New Era*, and last night the *Magnet* made her last trip. One or two of the American lake boats are still at work making irregular trips between Oswego and Ogdensburg; and it is said that the *British Queen* will be employed on the river between Ogdensburg and Kingston for some time yet. The *Prince of Wales* and *Farmer* are still on the Bay. The *Henry Gildersleeve* proposes to make two or three trips between Kingston and Ogdensburg. The *Lord Elgin* arrived from Montreal on Wednesday and is now laid up. During the past week the weather has been wintry, with showers of

rain, hail and snow. As yet there is no ice on the Rideau Canal to hinder the navigation; but the boats having made their last trips for the season the water will be drawn off immediately. The *Beaver* is at Kingston, where she will remain, and the *Prince Albert* will be laid up at Bytown. On the Ottawa for some days back there has been thin ice on the small bays.

—The *Toronto Globe*, December 10, 1850.

—Fred Landon.

#### PERRY'S FLEET

When the peace of 1815 had rendered the naval armament on Lake Erie useless, several of the vessels owned by the government were sunk for their preservation, in Presque Isle Bay, and have laid thus, wherein —

“The walls of the water’s vale

whose depths of dead calm are unmoved by the gale,

Dim mirrors of ruin hang gleaming about;

while the surf, like a chaos of stars, like a rout

Of death, flames like whirlpools of fire-flowing iron —

with splendor and terror the black ships’ environ.”

for nearly twenty years, until the enterprising policy of peace has made it an object to convert them to the purposes of commerce. The *Queen Charlotte*, one of the prizes, has already been raised, and is to be square rigged for the Chicago trade. The *Detroit*, another prize, is to be raised immediately, and the *Lawrence*, Perry’s flag vessel, is to be converted into a steamboat. The timbers are sound, and in the opinion of many, better calculated to resist the natural decay, than when first built.

The passengers on these relics of a heroic day, which are soon to visit the scenes of their by-gone glory, must be prompted to sublime reflections, when passing the Two Sisters and Put-in-Bay; and if it is not too long in anticipation, would merely hint, that a pleasure party could not better celebrate the “tenth of September,” than by a visit in these vessels to the graves of the heroes who fell in that conflict. It would be a solemn and instructive pilgrimage, the true in heart alone could undertake not in the spirit of triumph over fallen foes who are foes no more but in the spirit of philanthropy, to drop a tear for the fate of the brave where the victors and the vanquished sleep so lovingly in their mutual embrace.

—*Buffalo Republican*,

—*Chicago Democrat*, May 20, 1835.

—Captain John.



# GREAT LAKES CALENDAR

By BERTRAM B. LEWIS

## DECEMBER, 1950

The first oil from Alberta arrived at Superior, Wisconsin, where it was stored for transfer to lake tankers. It marked the opening of a 1,127-mile pipeline from Edmonton, built for the Interprovincial Pipeline Company. Its completion was expected to give another boost to the already thriving lake petroleum trade.

## DECEMBER, 1950

Twelve lives were lost when the tug *Sachem*, owned by the Dunbar & Sullivan Dredging Company of Detroit, sank between Buffalo and Dunkirk, New York. Cause of the sinking was not immediately determined, since there were no survivors. The 71-foot craft, built in 1907, had just been converted from coal to Diesel power.

## DECEMBER, 1950

The month brought announcement of plans for the construction of two new 626-foot iron ore carriers for the Bethlehem Transportation Company and of the purchase of seven government ships for conversion to ore vessels. The Bethlehem ships were to be built on the east coast and would be the first lake ore carriers to be constructed outside the lake area. The purchases included a Victory ship by the Cleveland-Cliffs Iron Company and three C-4s each by the Wisconsin & Michigan Steamship Company and the Nicholson Universal Steamship Company. All nine vessels were to be brought to the lakes by way of the Mississippi River and the Chicago Drainage Canal.

## DECEMBER, 1950

Cleveland Lodge No. 4 of the International Shipmasters Association moved from its antiquated quarters in the Perry-Payne Building to luxuriously appointed rooms at 1515 Euclid Avenue.

## JANUARY, 1951

Announcement was made of orders for two new Canadian bulk freighters, each 640 feet long and of 18,000-ton capacity. One, for the Upper Lakes & St. Lawrence Transportation Company, Ltd., was to be built at Midland, Ontario, the other, for Canada Steamship Lines, Ltd., at Port Arthur, Ontario.

## JANUARY, 1951

The coast guard began tests on a new navigation aid, called a "derm" (delayed echo radar marker). Purpose of the device, equipped with an antenna and "echo box," was to identify radar targets. It was the derm's first appearance on the Great Lakes.

## FEBRUARY, 1951

The Midland Steamship Company sold the 380-foot freighter *Macoubrey*, formerly the *John A. Donaldson*, to the Ore Steamship Corporation of New York. The trim, 43-year-old steamer was known among Midland sailors as the "yacht." Many of the fleet's officers had received their first training on her.

## NOTES

### Louis C. Sabin

THE GREAT LAKES HISTORICAL SOCIETY has suffered a severe loss in the death of Colonel Louis C. Sabin, for 23 years vice-president of the Lake Carriers' Association, and a charter member and trustee of the Society. He died on December 30, 1950, at the age of 83, at his Cleveland home.

He was born June 25, 1867, at Memphis, Michigan, the son of Carlton and Cordelia Bristol Sabin. Determining early to become an engineer, he combined work on construction projects with his schooling at the University of Michigan, from which he was graduated in 1890 with the degree of bachelor of science. Four years later he received the degree of civil engineer from the same school.

Meanwhile he had done inspection work for the engineering firm of Morison & Cothrell.

From 1890 to 1905 he was inspector and engineer for the United States Corps of Engineers. His work included the construction of the Poe Lock at the Soo, and his researches into the behavior of materials resulted in *Cement and Concrete*, a book published in 1904 and still consulted by construction men.

In 1896 Mr. Sabin developed the multiple wire method of base measurement for the Lake Survey, which he applied to establishing the final base line at Galveston, Texas. In 1899 he studied the flow of the St. Clair River, for which he invented a method of measurement.

From 1903 to 1905, in addition to his duties with the Engineers, he was secretary of the American section of the International Waterways Commission at Buffalo, engaged in studying the regulation of the height of water in Lake Erie and the effect of power projects on lake levels.

In 1906 Mr. Sabin became general superintendent of the St. Mary's Falls Canal, a post he held until 1925 when he came to Cleveland to be vice-president of the Lake Carriers' Association.

During his administration at the canal he designed and constructed what are still its largest locks, Davis Lock and Fourth Lock, both 1,350 feet long, to meet the load imposed on the waterway by World War I. Fourth Lock was named Sabin Lock in his honor by Congress in 1943, when World War II demonstrated how well he had built and anticipated the demands on the canal, the busiest waterway of its kind in the world.

Other honors bestowed on him were an honorary master of engineering degree, by the University of Michigan, 1916; honorary life member, American Society of Civil Engineers, 1945; and life member, International Shipmasters Association. In World War II, though a civilian, he was placed in charge of the Detroit district of the Corps of Engineers, an office usually reserved for colonels or brigadier generals. Because of that service he became "Colonel Sabin" to all his friends from Duluth to the Welland Canal.

From 1925 to 1948, when he retired, Colonel Sabin was the Lake Carriers' Association's expert on channels, charts, locks, water levels, dams, drafts and other navigational matters. During this period he became a member of the board of the Ohio Chamber of Commerce, and a life member of the Cleveland Engineering Society. He served for many years on the river and harbor committee of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce.

Among his professional associations were the American Association for Testing Materials, and the International Association of Navigation Congresses.

In 1890 he married Nellie Blanchard, who died in January, 1945. His second wife, Ruth Doucette, survives him, as do the two children of his first marriage, Carlton of Cleveland and Mrs. Frank E. Bagger of Brooklyn.

He was a friendly person with a wide acquaintance who will be deeply missed, especially by GLHS for his loyal support and wise counsel.

Adapted from the Cleveland  
*Plain Dealer*, December 31, 1950.

## New Advisory Editor

**W**E WELCOME DR. RUSSELL H. ANDERSON, Director of the Western Reserve Historical Society, as an advisory editor of *INLAND SEAS*. Mr. Laurence H. Norton, president of the Society, is one of our trustees; Mr. Herman L. Vail, their vice-president, is one of our earliest members; Dr. Anderson's new association will strengthen the long standing friendship between the groups. The Western Re-

serve Historical Society is widely known for the rich treasures of its library and museum, which include some notable material on the Great Lakes, and for its leadership in local history activities throughout northeastern Ohio.

Dr. Anderson's counsel will be most helpful and greatly appreciated.

—D. L. R.

## Correction

**I**N THE BOOK REVIEW OF *Sherman Hoyt's Memoirs*, *INLAND SEAS*, Winter, 1950, page 279, it was stated that the *Roland von Bremen* finished eighth among 27 starters in the race Bermuda to Cuxhaven. This was where she placed in the preliminary race from Newport to Bermuda,

while she was first to finish and easily the winner in the more important Bermuda to Cuxhaven race. The author was kind enough to send his membership to G. L. H. S. with his friendly letter of correction.

—D. L. R.

## Georgian Bay's Hamilton Island

**T**O THE FEW MOTORBOAT CRUISE PARTIES that visit it Hamilton Island's name is meaningless but the island itself is not easily forgotten. With a quarter-mile east-west length and one-eighth mile breadth it rises in successive granite terraces to a central plateau 57 feet above the water. Weathering of the rock has furnished food for the growth of pine trees.

Unfortunately this beautiful island is surrounded by dangerous underwater ledges that permit cabin cruisers to approach only from the southeast, and then only to within three hundred yards, landing being made from a rowboat. The island is uninhabited and an example of nature unspoiled.

The climb to the summit is rewarded by a splendid view of Georgian Bay's

sparkling waters to the south while to the east Toad Island marks the eastern entrance to Collins Inlet. To the north lies large Philip Edward Island where a Killarney citizen conducts a summer camp and to the west are islands of lesser height. After a day's enjoyable visit that is further enhanced by a shore dinner prepared by an Indian guide, it is surprising to learn that Mrs. Anna Jameson was definitely repelled by this island when she visited it in August, 1837.

"We landed today," she wrote in her narrative,<sup>1</sup> "on the Island of Skulls, an ancient sepulchre of the Hurons; some skulls and bones were scattered about, with the rough stones which had once been heaped over them. The spot was most wild and desolate, rising from the water's edge in successive ledges of rock to a considerable height, with a few blasted gray pines here and there round which several pairs of hawks were wheeling and uttering their shrill cry. We all declared we would not dine on this ominous island and proceeded. We doubled a remarkable cape mentioned by Alexander Henry as *Pointe au Grondines* or *Grondine Point*."

That the Island of Skulls is none other than Hamilton Island is definitely proven, not only by the detailed description but also by the fact that Grondine Point lies beyond Toad Island, about ten miles to the east on the old fur canoe route followed eastward by Mrs. Jameson. She erred in stating that Hamilton Island was used as a burial ground by the Huron Indians who lived one hundred miles to the south in what is now the northern part of Simcoe County. The skulls and bones were really macabre mementoes of a hand-to-hand conflict between the Mississaugas and Mohawks during one of the opening years of the eighteenth century.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century the great Mississauga nation lived in the Ohio River valley. Dissension among the chiefs resulted in secession of a large

portion of the nation and their migration northward through what is now the states of Illinois, Wisconsin and Michigan. They crossed into Canada at Sault Ste. Marie and built a town near the mouth of the Mississauga River where the town of Blind River is situated today. Other towns were built along the north shore of Georgian Bay. They are said to have settled around the Mississauga River as early as 1648.

When the Iroquois scattered the Hurons in 1648-49 it was to take possession of their hunting grounds. The Mohawks kept ranging northward for more beaver pelts and upon reaching the north shore came in contact with the Mississaugas and massacred several parties. They aimed to drive all of them away from the north shore and take possession of the beaver streams. It was, therefore, a matter of life and death to the Mississaugas and after holding a great war council they decided to attack the Mohawks and if possible drive them southward. A party of Mohawks had entrenched themselves on the "Island of Skulls," as it was afterward known. The Mississaugas, in their canoes, surrounded the island and landing from every quarter with superior numbers slaughtered the Mohawks. Those who survived were forced to retreat, but being a fierce and warlike tribe they resisted stubbornly. The Mississaugas followed them southward through the "Inside Passage," the Severn River, Lake Simcoe and the Trent Waterway. They continued their pursuit across the eastern end of Lake Ontario into New York State and besieged the Mohawks in their fortified stronghold on the Mohawk River. Realizing the futility of further mutual destruction the opposing forces concluded a peace and the Mississaugas returned to the present province of Ontario. Their chief settlements were on the banks of the Credit River near Toronto and on the islands and shores of the Bay of Quinte.

W. R. WILLIAMS

1. Mrs. Anna Jameson, *Winter Studies and Summer Rambles in Canada*, New York, Wiley and Putnam, vol. 2, p. 320.



## Recent Gifts

MRS. RUTH D. SABIN, widow of Col. Louis C. Sabin, has presented the Great Lakes Historical Society with several unique mementos of the steamer *Independence* which he had carefully preserved. These are: a round wooden case containing matches, an iron spike and a candle. The *Independence*, first steamship on Lake Superior, was wrecked on this lake near Sault Ste. Marie when her boilers ex-

ploded on November 22, 1853. She was a 262 ton propeller built at Chicago in 1843, the first propeller built on Lake Michigan.

Mr. James H. Fahey of the Fahey Yacht Company, Chicago, has given an 1871 edition of Disturnell's *The Great Lakes or Inland Seas*, a very useful source of Great Lakes history.

## The U. S. Revenue Cutter Perry

THE U. S. REVENUE CUTTER *Perry*, later to become the U. S. Coast Guard, was built in Buffalo, New York, in the year 1864. She was 162 feet in length, 25 foot beam and 10 foot draft, fitted with large surface propellers mounted on each side of the ship in paddle boxes and driven by a pair of simple engines. Only the lower portion or tips of the propellers were immersed in the water. It was claimed she was able to make 20 miles an

hour as long as the steam pressure lasted. Captain Douglas Ottinger was the first commanding officer and she was stationed at Erie, Pennsylvania. Later she was sold out of the service, had a single screw installed and ran as an excursion steamer out of Buffalo, her name being changed to the *Perrywinkle*. I made a short cruise on this ship when a young lad as the guest of President Garfield's secretary.

—CAPTAIN W. L. MORRISON

## Bartow C. Tucker

BARTOW C. TUCKER, a familiar figure in shipping in Cleveland around the turn of the century, passed away on Saturday, February 24, 1951, at 77 years of age.

On the occasion of a visit with Mr. Tucker in his office in the Midland Building about a year ago, I learned something of the career of this old timer on the lakes and had hoped to hear more, thinking his memories would interest readers of INLAND SEAS, for Mr. Tucker recalled early days in the history of Cleveland lake shipping, remembering such scenes as the Perry-Payne Building when it was open in the middle and steamboat men transacted their business over the railings by shouting up or down to each other on different floors. He recalled, too, seeing old Captain John Hutchinson sitting in his chair in his office in this same building.

Bart Tucker, with his father, had docks and warehouses along the Cuyahoga River,

at 57 River Street, and later 23 River Street, and were agents for the early package freighters. Bart Tucker was freight agent for the old Soo Line steamers when the line was first organized. The *Joseph L. Hurd* was one of the first of these steamers, a chartered vessel. Bart was a good friend of J. W. Norcross and was instrumental in getting Mr. Norcross to start the Canada Steamship Lines with the *Acadian* and *Canadian* which were built in England. He helped finance the *Noronic*, and gave a party on board, before she commenced regular sailings, for bankers and members of the Cleveland Chamber of Commerce, taking them on a trip to Detroit. Mr. Tucker was scared because the ship rolled heavily. Later she was rebuilt and widened to make her more stable.

In later years he had conducted a railroad equipment supply business under the name of the Midland Supply Company.

—F. W. D.

# The Great Lakes in Print

*An index to magazine articles and notes on the Great Lakes which have appeared in current periodicals not exclusively devoted to the lakes.*

*The A B C of Iron and Steel*, 6th Edition, 1950, pp. 17-29. Dan Reebel, editor. Iron Ore Transportation and Handling, by P. L. Tietjen.

*Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, September, 1950, pp. 237-253. Manufacturing in the Rock River Valley—Location Factors, by John W. Alexander.

*American Meteorological Society, Bulletin*, April, 1950, pp. 111-118. The Hudson Bay High and the Spring Fire Season in the Lake States, by Mark J. Schroeder.

*American Society of Civil Engineers, Transactions*, paper no. 2394, v. 115, 1950, pp. 145-152. Duluth-Superior Harbor, by Heston R. Cole.

*Canadian Geographical Journal*, January, 1951, pp. 26-33. The Ottawa-Nipissing Canoe Route in Early Western Travel, by George R. Rumney.

*Cleveland*, December, 1950, pp. 6-7, 30. Big Ships Get Bigger, by W. H. Gerhauser.

December, 1950, pp. 22-23, 38. U. S. Fisheries of the Great Lakes.

*Collier's*, December 2, 1950, pp. 24-25, 57. Democracy Bets on the Soo, by John Lear.

*Diesel Progress*, August, 1950, pp. 33-35. New Diesel Ferry for Michigan.

*Electrical Production*, October, 1950, pp. 10-11. Electricity Moves Mountains at Dock Company in Conneaut.

*Fire Control Notes*, U. S. Forest Service, January, 1950, pp. 1-8. The Hudson Bay High and the Spring Fire Season in the Lake States, by Mark J. Schroeder.

*Fishery Leaflet 384*, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, October, 1950. The Sea

Lamprey in the Great Lakes, by Vernon C. Applegate.

*Fortune*, December, 1950, pp. 84-90, 184-189. Battle of the St. Lawrence, by Freeman Lincoln.

*The Foundation*, October, 1950, pp. 3-5. The Great Lakes-St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project.

*Marine Engineering and Shipping Review*, July, 1950, pp. 68-71. Ice-breaking Ferry for the State of Michigan.

December, 1950, pp. 68, 72. Milwaukee Installs Heavy-lift crane.

February, 1951, pp. 52-56. Keel Laid for Pittsburgh Ore Carrier.

*Michigan History*, December, 1950, pp. 309-326. The Lake Superior Copper Fever, 1841-47, by Robert James Hybels. (Continued from September, 1950.)

*Midwest Engineer*, November, 1950, pp. 6-8, 22, 23. Great Lakes Bulk Freighter, The S. S. Wilfred Symes, by E. B. Williams, Kent C. Thornton, W. R. Douglas and Paul Miedlich.

*Motorship*, January, 1951, pp. 34-38. The Great Lakes—Potential Diesel Market, by George W. Grupp.

February, 1951, pp. 28-30. Unusual Vessel for Bulk Cargo Service on the Great Lakes. (The *Carport*, a tow-barge combination.)

*National Fire Protection Association, Quarterly*, January, 1950, pp. 213-226. The Noronic Pyre.

*National Geographic*, December, 1950, pp. 813-824. J. W. Westcott, Postman for the Great Lakes, by Cy La Tour.

*Nautical Gazette*, January, 1951, pp. 22-23. Steel Corporation Starts New Ship Program.

January, 1951, pp. 24, 28, 45. *Carport* and Barge G-1 Make New Type Craft. (For use on the Great Lakes in ice-free months.)

*Ohio Conservation Bulletin*, January, 1951, pp. 7, 30. Ice Fishing—Sport and Industry, by Dr. T. H. Langlois.

*Ontario History*, January, 1951, pp. 1-28. The Diary of William Graves, edited by Donald F. McOuat.

*Steel*, September 18, 1950, p. 80. Eye to the Future: Ore Boat Building Now.

*Tracks*, November, 1950, pp. 38-39. New Ships for the C and O Fleet.

*Water and Sanitation*, July, 1950, pp. 28-29, 39-40. Final Recommendations

for Abatement of Boundary-Waters Pollution.

August, 1950, pp. 28-30, 32-35. Grid System of Great Lakes Water Supply for Inland Cities of Ontario.

*Weatherwise*, December, 1950, pp. 123-126. Great Snows of the Great Lakes, by B. L. Wiggin.

*World Oil*, October, 1950, p. 229. Canada to Launch Largest Fresh Water Tankers.

## This Month's Contributors

CAPTAIN JOHN is H. A. MUSHAM, a retired naval architect of Chicago.

ANDREW T. BROWN, a graduate of the University of Michigan, holds an M.A. degree from Western Reserve University and is continuing his study of history at the University of Chicago.

CHARLES J. DOW of Conneaut, Ohio, is a Great Lakes collector of both data and marine objects who was one of the earliest and most enthusiastic members of G. L. H. S.

CAPTAIN LAUCHLEN P. MORRISON was an engineer at the Sault for many years.

LAWRENCE A. POMEROY, JR., is Secretary of the Great Lakes Historical Society. He is Traffic Manager with National Malleable and Steel Castings Company at Cleveland.

CAPTAIN H. C. INCHES, with the Interlake Steamship Company until his recent

retirement, is a trustee of G. L. H. S. and one of its best friends and supporters.

WALLACE B. WHITE is a former newspaper and advertising man whose personal hobby is Firelands history.

CAPTAIN W. L. MORRISON of Erie, Pennsylvania, was the last in command of the historic ship U.S.S. *Michigan* (the *Wolverine*).

BERTRAM B. LEWIS is Marine Editor of the Cleveland *Plain Dealer*.

W. R. WILLIAMS of Penetanguishene, Ontario, writes for Georgian Bay newspapers.

G. W. T. is GORDON W. THAYER, Editorial Advisor and Book Editor of INLAND SEAS; M. L. P. is MARGARET L. PETERS of the Technology Division of the Cleveland Public Library. F. W. D. is FRED W. DUTTON, Chief Clerk of the C. & O. Railway Law Department and has written frequently for INLAND SEAS.

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## Book Reviews

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CINDERELLA ISLAND, by Rob Roy Macleod. Grand Island, New York, Author, 1950. \$1.00.

Many thousand people have seen Grand Island, but few know where it is. It lies in the Niagara river, four miles above the Falls. It is the largest of the river's nineteen islands, of which but one, Goat Island, is a familiar name. Little has been written about any besides Goat Island, yet the story as told by Mr. Macleod, a resident of Grand Island, is worth the telling.

Grand Island is altogether rural. The rushing Niagara cut it off from industry until 1935, when the river was bridged. Before that islanders had to depend upon the uncertain service of ferries. It is to be hoped that the greater ease of communication with the outer world will not urbanize this haven of peace.

The island was probably discovered by La Salle in 1669, though the first mention is due to Father Hennepin. He speaks of "a great island," which undoubtedly inspired the name "La Grande Isle" on an early French map, and eventually the present designation. It figured in the French and Indian War, following which the Seneca Indians gave all the Niagara islands to Sir William Johnson as his personal property. The donation held good only until the colonies declared their independence. They then confiscated Grand Island.

In the War of 1812 the Niagara frontier, and Grand Island as part of it, saw much fighting. The last chapter in the active history of the island was written by the international boundary commission of 1822. That gave Grand Island to the United States, but by compensation drew the boundary in such a way that the Horseshoe Falls were awarded to Canada.

A later episode of interest was Major Mordecai M. Noah's attempt to form on the island a city of refuge for the Jews. It is a pity that Mr. Macleod apparently did not have access to Hyman Horowitz's article on the subject in *INLAND SEAS*.<sup>1</sup>

The less eventful years since then have been meticulously recorded by Mr. Macleod. He closes his narrative by a page on the five satellite islands of the subject of his paper. This contains material hard to find elsewhere.

A desirable footnote to history, *Cinderella Island* is illustrated with a map on the cover, and a portrait of Pendleton Clark, governor of a squatter settlement that tried to make Grand Island their own in 1819. There is no index.

—G. W. T.

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1. *Ararat on the Great Lakes*, vol. 4, pp. 120-123.



YACHTSMAN'S CAMERA, by Carleton Mitchell. New York, D. Van Nostrand, 1950. \$5.00.

An unusual and fascinating experience, both nautical and photographic, awaits the reader of this book. Here is a book of words and pictures, blending together in such a way that the pictures must be "read" to be enjoyed. The narrative accompanies the pictures much as the sound track accompanies movie film, the author directing the reader to the picture and then relying on the picture to complete the intended idea.

For those whose minds run to the tangible, the author has thoughtfully satisfied them in a section recording what, where and when "*The Yachtsman Saw*" the pictures. To this is added, in the column "*The Cameraman Recorded*" all the essential data for the photographic-minded.

The book is primarily about sailing, its contentment, solitude, or companionship; a love of water and a love of boats. The author has done a superb job in creating the feeling of his experiences, and seldom does one encounter such a splendid collection of photographs in a single volume. These are 125 photographs of participation and lessons in seamanship, excellent as to technique and artistic value. Reading it is delightful "sailing."

—M. L. P.

BEGINNER'S GUIDE TO FRESH-WATER LIFE, by Leon A. Hausman. New York, G. P. Putnam, 1950. \$2.00.

The name of this little volume indicates its purpose; it is an attempt to introduce to the incipient hydrobiologist the curious inhabitants of small pools, lakes, and streams, which are often so confusing to the novice.

Ingeniously arranged, the book presents sketches of some two hundred and fifty different kinds of large and small aquatic animals, together with a few microscopic plants. There are brief commentaries on the life and habits of each form. The figures are simple, yet clear, and all of them appear on the left-hand pages, leaving the right-hand ones for descriptive notes. There is no key employed; the collector is advised merely to thumb through the illustrations and to choose those which most closely resemble the forms which he wishes to identify. A suitable bibliography containing references to the more specialized works in this field, plus a few general text-books, is found at the end.

Whatever criticism the college biologist or the research worker may make regarding its lack of precision in classification (many fishes are not easily and surely identified by pictures alone, and there is at least one classification error), he cannot but admit that *Beginner's Guide to Fresh-water Life* will stimulate the interest and enthusiasm of the young natural historians for whom it was intended.

—I. S. H. M.

THE SAILING SHIP, A STUDY IN BEAUTY, by Stanley Rogers. New York, Harper & Brothers, 1950. \$7.50.

Readers of INLAND SEAS do not need to be told that a sailing ship is one of the most beautiful things in the world. Stanley Rogers, an English marine artist, analyzes this beauty in a volume whose attractiveness is eminently appropriate for his subject, enhanced by both colored illustrations and line drawings.

The first ships, the Egyptian, were shaped like a segment of a melon rind, without a keel, which came in with the Romans later. In the Middle Ages boats were tubby, their width being one third of their length, in contrast to modern Atlantic liners, like the *Queen Elizabeth*, that are nine times as long as they are broad. The first sails

were square, and remained so for thousands of years. The earliest fore-and-aft canvas was the lateen rig, whose date of origin is unknown. "Lateen" is a corruption of "Latin," but this type of sail seems to have originated with the Arabs. From it came all modern fore-and-aft vessels. Many were decorated, not with paint but with colored cloth stitched on in twine and often with heraldic devices, crosses and fabulous monsters, a suggestion for present-day owners who would like to individualize their boats.

Another popular form of decoration was the figurehead, a device used as far back as ancient Egypt, where the lotus flower on a curling stem appears on the bows. Elaborate coloring was used up to a century ago on the hulls.

There is an interesting chapter on shipbuilding. Suitable wood became so scarce in England that the Admiralty had to send to the Baltic for softwoods. Daniel Defoe, the author of *Robinson Crusoe*, says that in his time the roads were so bad that trees cut down in Sussex for the navy yards at Chatham, less than 30 miles away, took from two to three years to move across the country in slow stages on special wagons drawn by over twenty oxen. The biggest of all the wooden clippers was the *Great Republic*, 4,555 tons, built in 1853. Her construction required one and a half million feet of hard pine, and over two thousand tons of American oak, making her the strongest wooden vessel ever launched.

The coming of the steamer, and an interesting chapter on ship models complete a fascinating volume.

—G. W. T.

LEWIS CASS, THE LAST JEFFERSONIAN, by Frank B. Woodford. New Brunswick, New Jersey, Rutgers University Press, 1950. \$5.00.

A century ago Lewis Cass was one of the best-known figures in American public life, but now he is largely forgotten, except by historians and by visitors who pass by his monument on Cass Cliff on Mackinac Island. Yet he does not deserve oblivion for even today he ranks as the ablest statesman that Michigan has as yet produced and is still the only son of the Wolverine State to win a presidential nomination.

Born in New Hampshire in 1782, he moved to Ohio early and was elected to the legislature a year before he was actually old enough to be eligible. He deserved well of his country even at this early period, by learning of Aaron Burr's plot to set up a Midwestern empire and helping to nip it in the bud.

He served in the War of 1812 under the incompetent General Isaac Hull, remembered for his surrender of Detroit, but escaped the disgrace which attached itself to his superior. He even won a brigadier-generalship which caused him for the rest of his life to be referred to as General Cass. He was in the council of war which planned Perry's battle at Put-in-Bay, and was the recipient of his famous message, "We have met the enemy and they are ours."

Next came eighteen years as governor of Michigan Territory, his best work. He provided security for settlers. He built roads. He supplied the poor with provisions. He sponsored Henry R. Schoolcraft's famous exploration to the Lake Superior copper country. He defied the British, who still continued their practise of search and seizure on the lakes, and forced them to abandon it. He explored the Lake Superior country, and settled a budding war with the Winnebagoes. This record won him appointment as secretary of war in Jackson's cabinet, the first and perhaps only inhabitant of a territory to be appointed to the cabinet.

This promotion marked Cass's entry upon the national scene. With his later career as senator, presidential candidate and secretary of state INLAND SEAS is not concerned. It might be noted, however, that his cautious attitude toward the agitation of the

slavery question seems better justified now than it did to his contemporaries. Cass saw clearly that continuance of the debate must lead to a bitter war whose outcome was uncertain. Some of his opponents either saw less clearly or were indifferent to consequences.

The author, Frank B. Woodford of the Detroit *Free Press*, has studied the sources carefully, giving much attention to the manuscripts in the University of Michigan's William L. Clements Library, the Detroit Public Library's Burton Historical Collection, and many other places. He acknowledges particularly the help given by one of the editorial advisors of *INLAND SEAS*, Mrs. Elleine H. Stones, chief of the Burton Historical Collection. His careful scholarship makes it probable that this will be the standard life of Cass for many years to come.

—G. W. T.

*PREBLE'S BOYS, COMMODORE PREBLE AND THE BIRTH OF AMERICAN SEA POWER*, by Fletcher Pratt. New York, William Sloane Associates, 1950. \$5.00.

Stephen Decatur was speaking. After a fight with the Tripolitan pirates, he reported to Commodore Edward Preble, "I have brought you three of the enemy's gunboats, sir."

Preble, his face working, seized Decatur furiously by the lapels, almost shaking him as he cried, "Three, sir! Where are the rest of them? Why have you not brought me more, sir?"

This was Preble, "Old Pepper," to a T. Irascible and stern, he held his men to the same high standard which he observed himself. He was fair, too. Two minutes after his rebuke of Decatur, he sent for him to come to his cabin, and after a long time, since no sounds had emerged, a lieutenant finally ventured to open the door. The two men were seated side by side, and both were in tears.

Fletcher Pratt, the veteran writer on naval warfare, has now told the story of Preble and the fourteen brilliant fighting men whom he trained and inspired. According to Pratt, all the victories but one (Perry's Battle of Lake Erie) were fought by disciples of Preble, and nearly all his disciples won victories. This leads Pratt to see what was the common denominator of this varied group. He finds it in Preble's training or influence. Here he sometimes seems to assume more than the recorded facts will warrant, as he almost admits when he remarks, "Nor does it detract from the old Commodore's influence to point out that in some cases the service with him was brief, or the personal connection tenuous."

Of the fourteen, Isaac Hull was commander of the *Constitution*, whose victory over the British *Guerriere* is perhaps the most famous naval duel in American naval history. Jacob Jones, who led the *Wasp* to victory over the *Frolic*, enters the Great Lakes story by his participation in the skirmishing with the British fleet off Sackett's Harbor on Lake Ontario.

The most famous of the fourteen are undoubtedly Decatur, William Bainbridge, and James Lawrence ("Don't give up the ship"). Isaac Chauncey commanded at Sackett's Harbor; the chapter on him gives a good account of this episode in our lake history.

Less known are David Porter, who fought the Barbary pirates and the British, and wound up by long service as Minister to Constantinople; the eccentric William Burrows, who died in a naval battle in 1813; and the privateers Johnston Blakely, Lewis Warrington and James Biddle. Charles Stewart deserves to be better known, as the first to attain the rank of admiral, and mentioned for the presidency in 1844, when Polk beat



Henry Clay. Thomas Macdonough and Stephen Cassin won the Battle of Lake Champlain, and Daniel Todd Patterson helped to win the Battle of New Orleans.

Nearly all took part in both the War of 1812 and the brilliant triumphs over the Barbary pirates, whom our young nation was the first to challenge. The battles are described vividly and with technical correctness, as might be expected from Fletcher Pratt.

Pratt has a special knack for selecting telling phrases and anecdotes that will be remembered. What better eulogy for a seaman than Decatur's praise of Lawrence? "He had no talk, but inspired all about him with ardor; he always saw the best thing to be done; he knew the best way to do it; and he had no more dodge in him than the mainmast."

Or what more effective than David Porter's summary of Jefferson's farcical gunboat navy? "The navy is a glass of weak whiskey and water, the weak addition of the naval element having only diluted the draft without improving the taste."

Or the story of the Empress of Austria's visit to Charles Stewart's *Franklin* at Naples. One of the glittering officers of the Imperial suite mistook a windsail for something solid, leaned against it and tumbled into the cockpit. Stewart asked what the commotion was. "Oh, nothing, sir," an old quartermaster replied, "Just one of them damned kings has fallen down a hatch."

Thanks to Preble and the other heroes of the first thirty years of our naval history, the words of the most dazzling of them all hold true. Stephen Decatur told an Algerine admiral in words repeated by Admiral Halsey 132 years later, "American ships sail where they please."

—G. W. T.



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